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Strategic Personality and the Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence: Deterring Iraq and Iran

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

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**Strategic Personality and the
Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence:
Deterring Iraq and Iran**

Caroline F. Ziemke

PREFACE

This study was conducted under the sponsorship of the Advanced Systems and Concepts Office (ASCO) of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). It is a continuation of a study published by IDA and DTRA/ASCO in November 2000, entitled “Strategic Personality and the Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence” (IDA Document D-2537).

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Responsibility for any inaccuracies, omissions, or other lapses in judgment is, of course, the author’s alone.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The likelihood of some future rogue state launching an ICBM in what would certainly be a suicidal act of vengeance or retaliation against the United States is, if not altogether impossible, then at least vanishingly small. The real reason the United States must keep nonproliferation and nuclear deterrence at the very center of its national security strategy is the imperative to defend its oldest and most cherished Ultimate Concern: maintaining the global strategic, economic, and diplomatic freedom of action that enables the US to continue to implement and expand its national vision of personal, political, and economic liberty. If any state, anywhere, is allowed to achieve its strategic objectives through either the employment of nuclear weapons or through nuclear blackmail, then the ability of the US to pursue its global economic and political as well as strategic interests will be impaired to a degree that will prove devastating to its Ultimate Concerns and, hence, unacceptable.

For nearly five decades, the United States and the Soviet Union were locked in a strategic stand-off in which each was capable of inflicting social and military devastation on the other's homeland. The fall of the Iron Curtain and the collapse of the Soviet Union ended the bitter ideological rivalry that fueled the Cold War and brought the world back from the brink of a catastrophic nuclear war between two evenly matched superpowers. But the end of the Cold War, the emergence of the United States as the world's sole superpower, and its unchallenged military supremacy created something of a security paradox for the world's small and medium powers. On the one hand, they stood to reap the economic and social benefits of the emerging era of economic integration and political cooperation. On the other, the rise of unchallenged US strategic hegemony eliminated the strategic flexibility the less-than-major powers once enjoyed as a result of their ability to play one superpower's interests off against the other's. A sense of unease first emerged in the wake of the 1991 Persian Gulf War that, in addition to righting an egregious act of international aggression on the part of Iraq, demonstrated with chilling effect the scope and extent of US military-technical superiority.

That sense of unease among small and medium powers solidified into a deeper sense of threat in March 1999 when the United States and its NATO allies once again employed their vast military-technical superiority, this time to resolve an *internal* dispute

between the Serbian government and the ethnic Albanian majority in the province of Kosovo. Whatever else they thought of Slobodon Milosevic and his policies of ethnic cleansing, growing numbers of those less-than-major powers looked with alarm at what they saw as the increasing willingness of the United States to use its military supremacy to impose its liberal-democratic vision and values on the rest of the world. The conclusion that many of those states drew was that, if they were to avoid Serbia's fate, they would have to develop the capability to deter the United States from intervening in their future internal ethnic, religious, political, or regional disputes.

The rise of this "Kosovo Syndrome" has changed the context within which analysts and policymakers must think about future deterrence and threat reduction strategies for the United States and its Western European allies. The days of straightforward, bilateral superpower deterrence designed to prevent the outbreak of World War III in Central Europe, or across the 38th parallel in Korea, are over. In its place has emerged a new nuclear paradigm in which small and medium powers will try – perhaps with nuclear weapons – to deter the United States from projecting its overwhelming military power into their internal or regional conflicts. And the Kosovo Syndrome is not limited to the so-called "rogue" states – Indian analysts have cited the need to prevent the United States and NATO from intervening to resolve the festering Kashmir crisis as an important factor in justifying that state's decision to flaunt emerging international nonproliferation norms and become an overt nuclear power in 1998. These small and medium powers increasingly believe that since "once the US has committed its power against you, the game is lost" they must do everything they can in the earliest stages of a crisis to ensure that the US does not commit its force against them. In this new paradigm, nuclear weapons are no longer the threat of last resort; they are the opening gambit.

Iraq and Iran share many of the basic characteristics of the small and medium powers that are currently seeking nuclear weapons, at least in part in an effort to counter the Kosovo Syndrome. They are both aspiring regional hegemons who resent the continued US military presence that they believe prevents them from achieving their rightful status. Both also have ongoing or unresolved differences with neighboring states, dangerous internal instabilities, or both. Both have been strategically isolated since the end of the Cold War as the option of playing one superpower off against the other disappeared. Both have regimes, national principles or values, and national strategies that put them at odds with emerging (and from their view, US-engineered) international norms. And both are firmly convinced that the United States is determined to force

changes in their internal structures to bring them more into line with its own values and strategic objectives – changes that they both believe would undermine their identity, cohesion, and perhaps their national survival. As a result, any crisis involving either or both of these states is likely to escalate to include the United States, whether or not it did anything to foment the crisis. And if Iraq or Iran acquires nuclear weapons, an attempt to use those weapons to force the US out of the region or preempt intervention is likely to be among their opening moves. Despite these basic similarities, however, Iraq and Iran present very different kinds of deterrence challenges for the US. To apply a deterrent strategy designed for one to a crisis with the other could have catastrophic consequences.

How They See the United States

The Ultimate Concerns and Strategic Personality of the United States are critical factors in how crises involving Iraq and Iran are likely to unfold. The United States is an Extroverted, Intuitive, Feeling state. Its Ultimate Concerns are directly related to its liberal, democratic vision, which is deeply-rooted in the shared values of personal liberty, economic liberty, and political liberty (among many others). Two US Ultimate Concerns in particular, however, stand to put it perennially at odds with Iraq, Iran, and any number of other small and medium powers. Almost all US foreign policy and strategy flows from the Ultimate Concern of maintaining the strategic, political, economic, and cultural freedom-of-action that is required to advance the United States' other key Ultimate Concern: expanding and exporting its vision and values. This US drive to maintain its global freedom-of-action, combined with its post-Cold War strategic hegemony and military-technical supremacy, is the trigger for the Kosovo Syndrome that many less-than-major powers believe has set their Ultimate Concerns on a collision course with the United States.

As Introverted States, Iraq and Iran share a few basic elements of their perception of the United States. Both see US cultural and strategic expansiveness not as benevolent global meliorism but as malevolent global imperialism that aims to whittle away at the internal rights and prerogatives of sovereign states. They see the products of that expansiveness – American values and culture – as fundamentally threatening to their internal order, cohesion, and national autonomy. They do not recognize the legitimacy of the United States' global Ultimate Concerns, and they do not share US faith in the benefits of political internationalism, economic globalization, and strategic cooperation. Both are fundamentally threatened by the continuing US military and political presence

in the Persian Gulf region, which they regard (not unreasonably) as directed against them and their Ultimate Concerns.

Iraq, as a Sensing, Thinking state, sees itself as engaged in a game of strategic “Chicken” with the United States. It has clear territorial and resource needs that it has found difficult to fulfill through cooperation with its neighbors and believes it can more effectively achieve by means of force. Iraq will continually test how far it can push in pursuit of those objectives before the United States steps in and pushes back. Iraq has a clearly defined and transparent threshold of acceptable costs, mistakenly assumes that the United States has one too, and believes its challenges failed in the past because Iraqi forces were unable to impose high enough costs on the US – a shortcoming that it is confident nuclear weapons would rectify.

Intuitive, Feeling Iran sees itself engaged in an apocalyptic moral struggle to defend its pious, mystical, Islamic national vision against the United States with its profane, secular, and materialistic one. Iran assumes that the destruction of the Islamic Republic is one of the United States’ most important strategic objectives. It also believes that Iranian and American values are fundamentally irreconcilable. Iran’s threshold of risk is circumstantial – it might not be willing to absorb great losses to hold on to a specific piece of territory (such as Abu Musa and the Toombs), but as it demonstrated in the Iran-Iraq War, it will pay a devastating price to resist a threat to its vision and values. (In this regard, Saddam Hussein miscalculated and probably prolonged the Iran-Iraq War by casting what was essentially a bid for territorial expansion as a “jihad” to overthrow the dangerous and blasphemous regime in Iran.) Iran does not doubt that the US response to a unilateral nuclear attack against its forces would be immediate and catastrophic. The danger is that in the heat of a crisis Iran might perceive a US threat to its Ultimate Concern with the survival of the Islamic Republic where none really exists, provoking what it believes is a last-resort, “defensive” nuclear response.

The Utility of Nuclear Weapons

Because Iraq and Iran perceive and respond to threats to their Ultimate Concerns in different ways, they also have very different assessments of the utility of nuclear weapons in achieving their strategic objectives. Because its Ultimate Concerns and strategic objectives are centered primarily on territorial defense, military and economic power, and the physical means of regime control, Iraq is likely to regard nuclear weapons in operational terms, much as they did chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq War. This makes the risk that they might actually employ nuclear weapons relatively high,

especially early in a crisis when they might see them as either a force multiplier or a tool to increase US costs and trigger a withdrawal due to domestic political “casualty intolerance.” Deterring Iraq from using its nuclear weapons may, however, prove a relatively straightforward matter of convincing the Iraqi regime that the cost of US retaliation for nuclear use would be far in excess of any strategic benefit Iraq might hope to incur. The Sensing, Thinking Iraqis are likely to have initiated any crisis with a clear idea of their own threshold of acceptable losses based on a relatively transparent analysis of the absolute minimum residual force the regime must retain in order to maintain internal order and control.

Intuitive Iran’s strategic objectives, like its Ultimate Concerns, are much more nebulous and open-ended than Iraq’s. Its perception of the utility of nuclear weapons combines straightforward deterrence with a more opaque, mystical element. The Shi’ā theological values that underlie Feeling Iran’s strategic as well as its domestic national vision make it unlikely that Iran would use nuclear weapons unilaterally to achieve a purely operational or material strategic advantage. Iran’s view of the utility of nuclear weapons is defensive, and it has demonstrated a moral reluctance to use other types of weapons of mass destruction (chemical and biological weapons, both of which it is assumed to possess) in the past. Deterring Iran from using its nuclear weapons is, however, a more subjective and much less predictable undertaking than is deterring Iraq. Unlike the Iraqis, the Iranian regime is unlikely to have arrived at a clear calculation of when a resort to nuclear weapons might be morally acceptable and advantageous, but trusts it will recognize a catastrophic threat to its national vision and survival when it sees it. Because the Iranian strategic calculus is so opaque, the problem for US military and political decision-makers will be anticipating what Iran might perceive as such a threat and exerting the kind of painstaking control over every aspect of the crisis that can forestall potentially provocative mistakes. The Ayatollah Khomeini decided to accept the UN cease-fire that ended Iran’s eight-year war with Iraq largely because he believed the accidental downing of an Iranian passenger jet over the Persian Gulf in July 1988 by the *USS Vincennes* was an intentional signal that the US was entering the war on Iraq’s side. If Iran had nuclear weapons then, might that crisis have escalated out of control?

Deterrence Strategies

In a crisis involving the United States, Iraq and Iran are likely to pursue very different nuclear strategies that would, in turn, require distinctly different deterrent approaches. Iraq will seek to use its nuclear weapons to gain an operational advantage

and is likely to target concentrated US or allied forces in an effort to inflict an unsustainable level of casualties. Sensing, Thinking Iraq's conflicts tend to be traditional "sovereign's wars," the objectives of which are to advance regime objectives by occupying and annexing territory and inflicting physical military defeat on opponents. Iraqi regimes can tolerate a fairly high level of material damage and human suffering and casualties (a factor that has limited the effectiveness of the present sanctions regime), except to those military forces that it regards as essential to maintaining internal regime control and national cohesion. Two elements of a US strategy can contribute significantly to credible and effective deterrence. First, the US response to *any* Iraqi aggression should be disproportionate, inflict the maximum possible damage on key operational assets (especially those crucial to regime control, such as Republican Guards units), and be relentlessly consistent. Second, in the very earliest stages of any crisis, the United States should send a clear and unequivocal message to Iraq that the infliction of any US casualties will trigger a disproportionate response and that should those casualties be the result of an Iraqi nuclear attack, the response will be not only a disproportionate but also a catastrophic one that will leave the regime *no hope* of survival.

Iran's strategic paradigm tends toward the "People's War" model, in which the entire nation struggles to defend the national vision against hostile external forces. Because it is so certain that a unilateral nuclear attack against US forces would be suicidal, Iran is more likely to look for symbolic rather than operational targets for its nuclear weapons. Iran could probably absorb significant material costs resulting from mobilizing the economy or international economic sanctions, but unlike Iraq, it could not tolerate high levels of casualties – either military or civilian – unless national survival was clearly at stake. This points to US deterrence strategies against Iran that are fundamentally different than those for Iraq. The central imperative for US strategy in any crisis with Iran will be to control the emotional temperature of the crisis to prevent Iran from concluding that its national survival *is* at stake. For this reason, US responses to any Iranian aggression should be proportionate, precise, and carefully focused so that the *quid pro quo* is absolutely clear. If such a response is not immediately practical, then delay is preferable to bluntness. In any crisis with a nuclear-armed Iran, consistency will be less important than restraint to control escalation. The US nuclear deterrent against Iran is already credible. The most important factor in ensuring that it is also effective will be avoiding the kinds of accidental "escalations" that might lead Iran to conclude that its national survival is at stake and escalation to nuclear weapons hence theologically justifiable.

Long-Term Threat Reduction

The only way to permanently resolve the underlying cycle of crisis in the Persian Gulf region is to address the Ultimate Concerns of its two biggest powers – Iraq and Iran. The most effective way to do that would be to build regional security structures based on regional consensus rather than US fiat, that include all the concerned powers – even the “bad boys” – and that leave much of the responsibility for engineering, monitoring, implementing, and enforcing in the hands of regional powers. Any US military contributions to regional security – military presence, theater ballistic missile defense, intelligence sharing – will eventually have to include even those states whose regimes the United States finds objectionable. Such a structure could probably not be predicated on regime reform in Iraq or Iran, unless the US and its allies are willing to tolerate the current cycle of crisis for an indeterminate time to come. Until US relations with those states warm, such issues of internal affairs and human rights might best be left to neutral agents or pursued through multilateral institutions. Whether or not such a comprehensive security structure emerges, however, US military presence in the region must continue and should send two clear messages: that the United States will maintain its commitment to regional stability *because its Ultimate Concerns require it*, and that no nuclear arsenal that any regional power might acquire can be sufficient to ensure national survival for a state that uses nuclear weapons against the US, its forces, or its regional allies.

The challenges of long-term threat reduction in the Persian Gulf region point to a larger challenge for US strategy. The widespread acceptance of US strategic hegemony that characterized the 1990s is gradually eroding. Unless the United States is willing to accept the burden of a constant cycle of regional crisis, strategy in the post-Kosovo era will have to find ways to advance US Ultimate Concerns in ways that are more responsive or, at the very least, less provocative to the Ultimate Concerns of the less-than-major powers – even the ones it finds distasteful in terms of its vision and values. The only alternative is the establishment of an Imperial US that even our allies are likely to resist, that will constitute a major long-term drain on national blood and treasure, and for which little US domestic political will exists.

I. NUCLEAR DETERRENCE AND THREAT REDUCTION IN THE ERA OF THE “KOSOVO SYNDROME”

The end of the Cold War fundamentally altered the context for US nuclear strategies in ways that are only now – over a decade later – beginning to become clear. Cold War nuclear deterrence theory focused on a single type of conflict unique to the last half of the 20th century. Two apparently evenly-matched superpowers – each determined to prevent the other from gaining overwhelming strategic dominance – were engaged in a strategic stand-off in which the decisive theater of operations was mutually understood and narrowly defined and in which each was capable of inflicting catastrophic social and military devastation on the other’s homeland, even in a second-strike. The mutual nuclear deterrent between the United States and the Soviet Union was designed and intended to do one, narrowly defined thing – prevent the outbreak of World War III in Central Europe. With two exceptions – the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War – the US-USSR nuclear deterrent applied only in this context. After 1960, a similar nuclear status quo evolved between the United States and the People’s Republic of China regarding the standoff at the 38th parallel in Korea, although China never developed the capability to inflict “assured destruction” on the US homeland. But in both mutual deterrence relationships, the rules and the thresholds for nuclear use were fairly clear: nuclear deterrence was the tool of last resort to prevent a major shift in the strategic status quo. And the challenge for US military strategy was to manage future conflicts in such a way that they would never escalate to a level that would trigger the nuclear deterrent.¹

Since the end of the Cold War, the context for US nuclear strategy and threat reduction has become significantly more complex not only because there promises to be many more potential nuclear actors, but also because the context and rules according to which those new actors are likely to use nuclear weapons are fundamentally different. For most of the new nuclear powers likely to emerge over the coming decades, the Cold War and the US-USSR strategic standoff was not their defining strategic experience. Instead, most are states whose modern histories have been dominated by the struggle against

¹ For the purposes of this study, “triggering” a nuclear deterrent means either that a nuclear power issues a clear nuclear threat – “if the US does X, we will launch a nuclear attack” – or places its nuclear forces on a heightened alert status. It does not include hypothetical discussion of whether or not to use nuclear weapons to resolve crises when such debate did not lead to an overt threat or heightened alert (e.g., during the siege at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 or later debate over using nuclear weapons against North Vietnam during the mid-1960s).

Western, Japanese, or Soviet imperialism. And for them, the defining strategic event of the 1990s was not the end of the Cold War per se but the rise of absolute US military supremacy, which carries with it the specter of a new brand of “imperialism.” The first hints of this development emerged during the 1991 Persian Gulf War when the implications of apparently insurmountable US technological dominance in the air and on the battlefield led nations like China to fundamentally rethink their military capabilities, with an eye toward possible “asymmetric” strategies. But in 1991, Iraq was a clear aggressor that brought the wrath of US military superiority down upon itself, and the United States acted at the request of and in concert with Iraq’s Arab neighbors. Few states (except China, Russia, and a handful of so-called “rogues”) seemed terribly bothered by the United States’ status as the world’s sole superpower, and many states courted closer ties with the US and seemed to almost welcome US hegemony.

It was only later that the less-than-major powers began to worry that the US might use its supremacy not just to punish aggression but to impose a sort of imperialism of vision and values. The event that served finally to solidify this sense of unease into a new strategic outlook was the US/NATO air campaign in Kosovo. It was at this point that the context in which US nuclear strategy must operate shifted significantly and permanently from one in which the US used its nuclear arsenal to deter major aggression against itself or its allies, to one in which smaller powers would seek to acquire nuclear arsenals to deter the US from imposing its will and values on their internal or bilateral affairs. The greatest intellectual stumbling block to rethinking US deterrence strategies has been the inability of Cold War deterrence theory to cope with the new strategic reality: that in a proliferation world, the US is no longer the defender in the most dangerous nuclear scenarios, it is (at least in the early stages of crises) the challenger. Deterrence strategies in this context must be supple enough to function at (and between) three distinct levels: 1) continuing to deter international aggression, 2) countering nuclear deterrents designed to prevent US intervention in internal or bilateral disputes, and 3) deterring the use of nuclear weapons in resolving regional crises.

This paradigm shift is embodied in what might be called the “Kosovo Syndrome” that increasingly informs the strategic thinking of small and medium powers, whether or not they have or are seeking nuclear weapons. The fate of Serbia drove home to these states their degree of vulnerability to the will of a United States determined to expand its values throughout the rest of the world. States that felt threatened by US conventional supremacy – including states that are not and never have been either “rogues” or on particularly hostile terms with the US – increasingly concluded that they must be able to

deter the US or defend themselves on their own if they became the target of a similar US “humanitarian intervention.” Columnist M. D. Nalapat of the *Times of India* used the Kosovo analogy to rationalize India’s entry into the nuclear club in 1998 in spite of its long record of anti-nuclearism:

Kosovo has shown the need for Indian power, and the need for diplomacy that can bring the three giants of Asia together, not to begin a world war but to stop the NATO planners from igniting one with their racist arrogance.²

For these small and medium powers, whatever they think of the relative merits of the Serbian regime and its policies in Kosovo, the lessons of the Kosovo intervention are clear, and disturbing:

- Serbia had not committed, or even threatened, international aggression (as Iraq unambiguously did in 1990).
- The United States employed its vast qualitative and quantitative military superiority disproportionately against a much smaller and weaker opponent, apparently without serious qualms about “collateral damage.”
- Serbia’s conventional military capabilities were helpless against the American military onslaught, while the standoff US / NATO forces were impervious to Serbian counter-attack.
- The United States and its NATO allies were acting not in defense of internal stability but in order to impose a solution consistent with their values in an entirely internal ethnic / political dispute in Serbia.
- The US and its partners were indifferent to the will of the Serbian people, their physical well-being, or Serbia’s national survival.
- Once the US has committed its forces against you, the game is lost no matter how “legitimate” your strategic objectives. So the only hope of prevailing lies in *deterring* the US from committing its forces.

The Indian decision to become a declared nuclear power indicates that the Kosovo Syndrome could become a major motivating factor for nuclear proliferation – both among the states seeking nuclear weapons and the ones (like China and North Korea) who are willing to export relevant technologies. It could also result in the emergence of strategic alignments among states who want to neutralize, or at least “contain,” US conventional supremacy. In this study, however, the issue is the degree to which the Kosovo Syndrome makes the United States the likely target of nuclear deterrence in crises far below the

² Quoted in Raju G. C. Thomas, “India’s Nuclear and Missile Programs: Strategy, Intentions, and Capabilities,” in Raju G. C. Thomas and Amit Gupta, eds., *India’s Nuclear Security* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), p. 101.

level of global “strategic decisiveness” that was the focus of Cold War deterrence theory. If small and medium powers who see their strategic objectives as at odds with the United States’ global agenda also believe that “once the US has committed its force against you, the game is lost,” then they will increasingly focus on how they can ensure that the US does not commit its forces. In this paradigm; nuclear weapons are no longer the endgame, they are the opening gambit. And the challenge for US strategy is to find a way to *de-escalate* from nuclear crisis in order to project US power – whether military or diplomatic – in pursuit of a non-nuclear resolution.³

A. STRATEGIC PERSONALITY AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

The IDA study *Strategic Personality and the Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence* (2000) concluded that effective deterrence depends on two key factors: 1) how well the participants in a crisis communicate their Ultimate Concerns, interests, and intentions in a way their opponents and allies can understand, and 2) the nature of the balance of Ultimate Concerns at stake between defenders and would-be challengers.⁴ It proceeded from the assumption that the long-term success of deterrence and threat reduction strategies depends in large part on the degree to which they address the underlying causes of international crises. These underlying causes can be found by focusing not on surface events but on each participant’s Ultimate Concerns – the set of material, moral, or ideological factors that have emerged over the course of a state’s history as the keys to its long-term survival, cohesion, and sense of national well-being. Even during the long lulls between crises, events constantly buffet a state’s Ultimate Concerns. How individual states perceive the effects of those events, identify threats or vulnerabilities, and decide on the best course of action to advance or defend their Ultimate Concerns is shaped by their habitual perceptive and decision-making styles – their Strategic Personalities.⁵ A series of historical case studies demonstrated how differences in the Strategic

³ This study assumes that near-100% reliable and effective theater ballistic missile defense is not in place at the time of the crises described in the scenarios. How the deployment of such defensive capabilities might influence the conduct of challengers like Iraq and Iran is beyond the scope of this paper, but clearly merits further consideration.

⁴ Caroline F. Ziemke, Philippe Loustaunau, and Amy Alrich, *Strategic Personality and the Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence*, IDA Document D-2537 (Alexandria, Virginia: Institute for Defense Analyses, November 2000).

⁵ A more detailed description of the elements of Strategic Personality and of the characteristics of the various Strategic Personality Types can be found in Appendix A. Appendix B contains a chart describing the nature of Ultimate Concerns for each of the eight Strategic Personality Types, and Appendix C lists exemplar states for each of the Types.

Personalities of states shaped deterrence and threat reduction strategies in the past and affected the credibility and effectiveness of those approaches. Over the course of these cases studies, it became apparent that communication and comprehension were the keys to the effectiveness of deterrent strategies. The study's conclusions suggested how an awareness of Strategic Personality and Ultimate Concerns could facilitate more credible and effective deterrence and threat reduction strategies against an expanding spectrum of potential nuclear challengers.

B. “DETERRING” IRAN AND IRAQ

This study builds on those insights but takes a more prescriptive approach: how can analysts and policymakers craft more effective deterrence and threat reduction strategies against specific threats in the future. It also turns the tables somewhat by focusing on how small and medium nuclear powers might use nuclear weapons to try to avoid falling victim to the “Kosovo Syndrome.” The problem this paper addresses is not simply “deterring Iraq and Iran,” rather, it is “preventing Iraq and Iran from using nuclear weapons to deter the US from pursuing its own Ultimate Concerns.” Chapters II and III present two case studies based on plausible (but not necessarily probable) future scenarios, both set in the not-too-distant future but before deployment of a reliable and effective theater-wide ballistic missile defense system, and focused on two states that top most lists of likely future nuclear challengers: Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Each case study begins with a brief survey of how the historical plots of Iraq and Iran shaped their Ultimate Concerns and Strategic Personalities. A thumbnail sketch of the Strategic Personality of each state is followed by some historical background to the scenarios and a description of the onset of the crisis. These case studies develop the scenarios from “inside” the Strategic Personality of the challengers – how they define and react to threats to their Ultimate Concerns, and how they perceive the other strategic actors in the crisis (including the United States). These narratives are, at times, jarring, since they portray the challengers and their interests not as *we* see them, but as *they* see themselves – as states pursuing legitimate and strategically rational objectives in the face of obstruction from an expansionist, imperialist US.

The first challenge in both scenarios is to get US force *into* the crisis (or keep it there) in the face of overt nuclear threats; only then does the focus shift to resolving the crisis in a way that deters the “challengers” from using their nuclear weapons in the endgame. The analytical goal is twofold: 1) to break the complexities of the scenario down to a basic strategic calculus that defines the underlying causes of the crises, the

strategic objectives of the challengers, and how they calculate the utility of nuclear weapons in achieving those objectives, and 2) to use those strategic calculi to move toward a theoretical framework for grappling with the implications of the Kosovo Syndrome (by casting the US, in the initial phases of the crisis, not as the defender but as the would-be challenger). Each case study concludes with a set of insights – derived by processing the scenarios through the filter of each challenger's unique set of Ultimate Concerns and Strategic Personality – into how the United States might most effectively inject its force into the crisis, resolve the crisis while deterring nuclear use, and lay the groundwork for effective threat reduction after the crisis is over.

The case studies presented in this paper share some basic characteristics common to the kinds of crises in which the Kosovo analogy is likely to apply. Both Iraq and Iran are and have long been aspiring regional hegemons and, for that reason among many others, deeply resent the continued US military and political presence in the Persian Gulf region. Both states also have established records of political and military conflict with neighboring states and/or with the US that predate their present regimes and which leave their neighbors suspicious of their strategic intentions even in periods of reduced tension. Iraq and Iran have both been relatively isolated – politically and economically – in recent years, not only within the Persian Gulf region but globally; and while their respective regimes recognize the necessity of ending or at least moderating that isolation, both fear that the external stresses that will inevitably result from economic and political integration will be more than their internal cohesion can withstand. Both have regimes, values, and national strategies that have put them at odds with the national interests of their neighbors, with emerging international norms (the legitimacy of which they do not fully recognize), and most importantly, with US values. Finally, both believe that the United States is determined to force changes in their internal structures to bring them in line with its own values and strategic expectations; changes that they believe will undermine their identity and cohesion and may threaten their national survival.

In each of these scenarios, the United States, while a central factor in the strategic calculus of Iraq and Iran, plays no direct role in provoking the crises. It immediately becomes a target of nuclear blackmail because of its superpower status, its significant military and political presence in the region, and its established role as the fulcrum of the regional security balance in the Persian Gulf. The underlying causes of both crises can, however, be traced to internal instabilities and insecurities – of a new and still shaky Ba'athist regime in Iraq and an old and discredited hard-line Islamist regime in Iran. These internal political crises become internationalized because the Introverted

“challengers” – Iraq and Iran – want to ensure their ability to resolve their internal crises free from external intervention – they want to avoid the Kosovo Syndrome.

The study concludes with a comparison of the insights gained from each individual case study, some implications for effective deterrence strategies, and suggests a framework for determining how the US can facilitate a permanent solution to the cycle of crisis in the Persian Gulf region and what the role of the United States can and should be in such a solution. The point of this exercise is not to assert that the deterrence and long-term threat reduction approaches suggested here are the only, or even the optimum, options for dealing with strategic threats from Iraq or Iran in the future. Rather, the goal is to present an analytical framework designed to enable policy-makers and analysts to apply the internal strategic calculus of future would-be challengers in developing alternative deterrence and threat reduction strategies against the increasingly diverse set of potential challenges the US will face in the future.

II. DETERRING IRAQ

A. IRAQ'S STRATEGIC PERSONALITY

1. The Cradle of Civilization

In the aftermath of the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the Bush administration decided not to lend support to a Shi'a uprising against the regime of Saddam Hussein. Chas Freeman, the US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia at the time, explained that Washington had based its decision on an obsession with the idea that the Shi'a of southern Iraq were Iranian surrogates with separatist ambitions. “I don’t know where all this panic about the breakup of Iraq came from,” Freeman later commented. In part, the panic might be explained by Iraq’s long history of internal turmoil coupled with the historical bromide that Iraq is an artificial state, an arbitrary construction of European colonial policies with no more historical meaning than a random set of lines on a map. For some post-colonial states, that might well be so. But in Iraq’s case, nothing could be further from the truth. “After all,” as Ambassador Freeman pointed out, “Mesopotamia has been there for quite a while – about six thousand years. Iraq is not a flimsy construction.”⁶

The intractable forces of nature and geography have bound together the fates of the various groups inhabiting Mesopotamia since ancient times and have shaped Iraq’s Sensing orientation. Mesopotamia lies on the vast, stone-free, alluvial lowlands of the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys. In Mesopotamia (“the land between the rivers”), as also in Egypt, rich, fertile soil encouraged the development of agriculture; but seasonal floods and low rainfall necessitated heavy reliance on irrigation, which in turn encouraged the early development of complex political and administrative structures and the rise of history’s earliest civilizations. In stark contrast to Egypt, however, the ancient Mesopotamian civilizations did not mature in geographic isolation. No geographical boundaries inhibited east-west travel into or across Iraq, which became one of the most important transit points and cultural crossroads of the ancient world. That, combined with its agricultural wealth and dependence on a strategically vulnerable water supply, also left Mesopotamia perpetually subject to hostile invasions. But even when it was dominated by “barbarian” emperors, the indigenous societies of Mesopotamia remained

⁶ Quoted in Andrew Cockburn and Patrick Cockburn, *Out of the Ashes: The Resurrection of Saddam Hussein* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999), p. 40.

the cultural and civilizational center-of-gravity of the ancient Near East, the “cradle of civilization.”

Ancient Sumerian myth contains no reference to an ancestral homeland, portraying instead a civilization that germinated from the soil of the Tigris-Euphrates valley. The religions of the ancient Mesopotamians, like the philosophy of modern Iraqis, reflected a fatalism rooted in the nature of life in that unpredictable and often violent geography. The rivers support life, but if their floods are too high or too low, they can also destroy it. The Sumerian myth of the Deluge, which comes down to the Western world in the form of the Biblical story of Noah and the Great Flood, expresses the resulting sense of helplessness in the face of the forces of nature. The Babylonians were legendary in the ancient world for their pessimism. Modern Iraqis are renowned for their fatalism. Both are products of the sense of uncertainty shaped by the realities of life on the Mesopotamian plains.

If the forces of nature were instruments for ancient Mesopotamian unity, the forces of politics just as surely sundered it. Through most of its ancient history, the region was organized into a system of autonomous city-states that were periodically unified under a single (usually nomadic “barbarian”) empire. The Babylonian, Assyrian, Kassite, and Akkadian empires managed to bring ancient Mesopotamia under a single administration, but a constant and natural tension between lower Mesopotamia (which contained the richest agricultural land and, thus, much of the wealth) and upper Mesopotamia and the border regions (which because they controlled the sources of water had the strategic advantage) always prevented the establishment of a durable national government. The rise and fall of empires followed a persistent pattern that would become all too familiar throughout Iraq’s history: rapid expansion of power, administrative centralization, systems of elite patronage that made little effort to assimilate subject towns and peoples at the grassroots, and internal rebellions and political intrigues that weakened internal cohesion, paving the way for new invasions by border “barbarians.”⁷

The last of the great Mesopotamian empires, the second Babylonian empire, finally collapsed in the 6th century BCE under the pressure of internal division and waves of external invaders – Persians, Greeks, Arameans, and pre-Islamic Arabs. By the time of the Islamization of Iraq in the 7th century CE, conscious historical links with ancient Mesopotamia had broken. It is even doubtful, given the numerous subsequent waves of invasion and migration, that any clear genetic links remain between modern Iraqis and

⁷ Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1985), p. 14.

the ancient Mesopotamians (as do exist between modern Egyptians and their ancient ancestors). Still, cultural links with those ancient civilizations remain, not just in Iraq and the Near East but throughout the Western World. Important elements of Sumerian myth were incorporated into the Hebrew Bible, in part thanks to the fact that the Sumerians invented writing, which enabled man to communicate not only across distances, but across time. Many of the innovations once attributed to the genius of ancient Greece – in science, astronomy, and mathematics – had roots in ancient Mesopotamia. But there is a special link between ancient Mesopotamia and modern Iraq – both civilizations draw from the geography of Mesopotamia the stoicism, conservatism, and fatalism that have been the backbone of culture and society in the land between the rivers since ancient time and that still contribute to Iraq's Sensing and Thinking orientations.⁸

2. The Abbasid Caliphate

The death of the Prophet Mohammed in 632 ushered in three decades of conflict within the ranks of the Muslim elite over who would be Caliph – the successor to the Prophet and the supreme religious and temporal authority in the Muslim community. A civil war broke out in 656 CE that brought these internal divisions to a head. The supporters of the Imam ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib (cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet) asserted his right to leadership on the basis of his close relationship with Mohammed and his personal piety. Supporters of the Umayyad pretender, Mu’awiya, a Syrian tribal warrior, predicated his claim to leadership on his military prowess and ability to expand the territory of Islam. Mu’awiya and his ‘Umayyad dynasty finally prevailed and established the ‘Umayyad Caliphate in 661, but they did so at the cost of a political and religious schism that would forever divide the Muslim community between the followers of ‘Ali – who became known as the Shi'a – and the supporters of the ‘Umayyads – the Sunni. Under the ‘Umayyad Caliphate, power shifted from the merchant-class Muslim elites of Mecca and Medinah to tribal warriors who moved the capital of Islam to Damascus and spent the next century in a military campaign to expand the territory of the Arab/Islamic empire.

The ‘Umayyads ruled their Arab empire with an iron fist, creating deep resentments in the provinces, especially among the Shi'a of Iraq and Persia, who condemned the Caliph's impious hunger for temporal power to the detriment of the spiritual piety and well-being of the Muslim community. The expense of endless

⁸ Georges Roux, *Ancient Iraq* (New York: Penguin, 1993), p. 85, 426.

campaigns of military conquest drained the resources and energy of the ‘Umayyads, paving the way for the rise of a rival alliance of Sunni and Shi’ā dissenters who eventually overthrew the crumbling regime and established the new Abbasid Caliphate in 750. The Abbasids established a new capital for the Islamic empire at Baghdad. Officially named *Madinat as-Salam* (“city of peace”), Baghdad was laid out in a great circle straddling the Tigris to symbolize the symmetry and unity of Muslim society and the centrality of the Caliph as the bringer of order from chaos. Baghdad (as it immediately came to be commonly called) became a commercial and industrial as well as a spiritual and administrative center and quickly grew into the largest city in the Middle East and the largest in the world outside China. It was a cosmopolitan city that embraced Jews and Christians as well as Muslims; and Persians, Central Asians, and Arabs from across the empire. Baghdad produced the wealth and manpower the Abbasids needed to run a great empire, and in the process became the crucible for the Golden Age of Islam.

The era of Arab conquest and expansion was over. The tribal warrior hierarchy became less influential, while the urban administrative bureaucracy grew in both size and complexity. The Abbasid administration depended heavily on ties of patronage between government and local and tribal elites. Even at the zenith of its power, the Abbasid Caliphate – as would every other regime that attempted to control Mesopotamia / Iraq – faced constant opposition from border people, nomads, and religious visionaries (especially, the Shi’ā, who turned against their former Abbasid allies, believing that they had compromised their pious goal of building a righteous society in pursuit of power and wealth). The Abbasids struggled to build legitimacy, which they expressed not in religious terms, but in deeper cultural terms that drew on ancient pre-Islamic concepts of kingship as much as on Islamic leadership.

One legacy of the Abbasid quest for cultural legitimacy was the dawn of the Islamic Golden Age. While Europe was still in the throes of its “Dark Ages,” the Abbasids launched an Islamic renaissance, creating an urban, cosmopolitan Islamic civilization to offset the dour, Spartan values of the nomadic Arab warrior class. The Caliphate patronized literature and philosophy to propagate shared values and symbols and ordered the translation of cultural elements from all over the ancient world: poetry, myth, and scientific writings from Persia; scientific tomes and myths from India; and science and philosophy from ancient Greece. The Abbasid Caliphate was also a period of emerging Arab cultural identity and cultural cross-pollination with Persia that shifted the center of Arab culture further from the austere desert warrior culture toward an urban, cosmopolitan one. Linguists codified the vocabulary and grammar of the Arabic

language, and a thriving secular Arab literature began to develop, along with a sophisticated empirical and experimental science.

The Mesopotamian / Iraqi historical plot began to reassert itself by the mid-10th century. The Abbasid Caliphs became figureheads as control of the provinces outside of Baghdad shifted increasingly to local governors and tribal leaders. Bedouin raiders began to harass traders between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, threatening Baghdad's greatest source of wealth. Trade began to pass Iraq by, and while it remained a cultural center of the Arab world, Baghdad's real power waned. For much of the next two centuries, Iran and Iraq were ruled together by a coalition of religious Caliphs and temporal Sultans; when the Sultans were weak, power might shift briefly back to Baghdad, but the trend was toward decline. In February 1258, Mongol armies stormed, looted, and burned Baghdad, and executed the Caliph and the remaining members of the House of Abbas. The effect of the Mongol scourge on Iraq was well and truly devastating. What was once the center of a thriving urban civilization was laid waste and left to decay as a much neglected bit of the Mongol empire. Trade came to a complete halt, agriculture gave way to pastoral nomads as the vital canal system fell into disrepair, and the civilizational centers of Islam shifted to Iran and Ottoman Anatolia. When, three centuries later, Iraq became an Ottoman province, the administrative indifference continued.⁹

The final demise of the Abbasids also marked the end of Islamic unity, and over the next centuries the Middle East atomized into a number of smaller states. The cultural and economic isolation of Iraq under the Mongols and Ottoman Turks shaped its Introverted orientation by leaving it remote not only from the West, but also from the rest of the Arab world until the early 20th century. Little remains today of the splendor of Abbasid Baghdad – the forces of man (waves of destructive invaders) and nature have worn it away. But the structure and layout of the city remains much as it was as a reminder of Iraq's golden age. It is also a powerful symbol of Iraq's Introverted, Sensing, Thinking strategic personality. Baghdad retains the circular structure that the first Abbasids designed for it; and it remains, as the capital of modern Iraq, the symbol of the often fleeting unity of the people of Iraq and the centrality of the Caliph – as the personification of the state – in imposing order on chaos – only today, the Caliph is Saddam Hussein.

⁹ Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2,000 Years* (New York: Scribner, 1995), pp. 97-99.

3. From Gilgamesh, Hammurapi, and Nebuchadrezzar to Saddam Hussein

Gilgamesh. The epic story of the Sumerian king Gilgamesh – “He who saw everything to the ends of the world” – is the world’s oldest existing work of literature, dating from at least 2000 BCE.¹⁰ Gilgamesh was the supremely strong, brave, handsome, and effective ruler of the kingdom of Erech in Sumer (the ancient Mesopotamian civilization located between the Tigris and Euphrates, south of present-day Baghdad, that gave Mesopotamia the Arabic name by which it has been known since medieval times: *al-Iraq* or *Iraq al-Arabi*, which in Arabic means “deeply-rooted”). Because as a young man Gilgamesh was also arrogant, ruthless, and depraved, his long-suffering people appealed to their gods to send a challenger to restrain their king’s brutal streak. The gods created a superhumanly strong, hairy, desert-dwelling wild-man called Enkidu whom Gilgamesh had captured and brought to Erech. The two fought, but then became fast friends and set out on a series of adventures, slaying the giant Hawawa and a fierce bull sent by the goddess Ishtar to kill Gilgamesh after he spurned her romantic advances. Gilgamesh’s hubris insulted the gods, and while they could not slay him, they punished his arrogance by causing Enkidu to suffer a long, painful death. Horrified by the death of his friend, Gilgamesh faces the specter of his own mortality:

Fearing death I roam over the steppe;
The matter of my friend rests heavy upon me.
How can I be silent? How can I be still?
My friend, whom I loved, has turned to clay,
Must I, too, like him, lay me down
Not to rise again for ever and ever?¹¹

In yet another effort to best the gods, Gilgamesh set out to find the ancient Utnapishtam, the only human to survive the great Deluge sent by the gods to destroy humanity, and learn from him the secret of immortality. Utnapishtam gave Gilgamesh a pessimistic reply:

Do we build houses for ever?
Does the river for ever raise up and bring floods?
The dragon-fly leaves its shell
That its face might but glance at the face of the sun.

¹⁰ The epic of Gilgamesh originated in ancient Sumerian legend as a series of unconnected episodes in the life of an historical figure. A later poet or poets collected these tales and linked them with additional material to create the Gilgamesh Epic, which has survived nearly complete in several versions, the best known and most complete of which was found in the library of the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (c. 669-627 BCE). It is this version upon which this summary is based. See Peter Bently, ed., *The Dictionary of World Myth* (New York: Facts on File, 1995), p. 84.

¹¹ Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 119.

Since the days of yore there has been no permanence;
The resting and the dead, how alike they are!¹²

But he told Gilgamesh to look for a thorny plant that grows in the deep of the sea and could restore life. Gilgamesh tied boulders to his feet and dove to the bottom of the sea to retrieve the plant, only to have it later stolen from him by a water snake while he slept near a spring. Resigned to his own mortality, Gilgamesh returned to Erech where he continued to rule the kingdom to which he was devoted.

Hammurapi.¹³ The Babylonian king Hammurapi (c. 1792-1750 BCE) was sixth in the Amorite dynasty (from the Babylonian word for “westerners”) descended from nomadic tribes that invaded Mesopotamia about 2000 BCE. He inherited from his father Sinmuballit a strong but small kingdom surrounded by more powerful kingdoms to the north and south. Hammurapi spent the first year of his reign raising his kingdom’s prosperity through public works projects to improve irrigation and fortifications and build temples to exalt the Babylonian god Marduk. But all the while Hammurapi was forging alliances and watching for the opportunity to expand his empire. When the moment was ripe, he overthrew Larsa to the south and Eshnunna and Assyria to the north to become the master of all Mesopotamia. In his foreign affairs, Hammurapi presents the figure of a patient and cunning ruler who observes more than he acts and waits to strike until he is certain of victory. By the end of his reign, Hammurapi claimed the titles of King of Babylon, King of Amurru, King of Sumer and Akkad, and King of the Four Quarters of the World (although not, as would later Babylonian king Nebuchadrezzar, “the Universe”).¹⁴

Hammurapi is revered in Western as well as Iraqi historical tradition as the first great lawgiver. His extensive legal “Code of Hammurapi” was engraved on stone stelae that have survived nearly entire. His legal code stands as the earliest and most extensive record of the principles of a just and orderly society, the central value of human life, and the king’s role as an instrument of justice that shaped Jewish, Christian, and Islamic law through the ages. But Hammurapi’s Code pairs a clear passion for justice with a belief in swift, firm, and to modern eyes, cruel punishment. As he wrote in his Code, Hammurapi

¹² Ibid., p. 120.

¹³ Often rendered in the Biblical form “Hammurabi,” Hammurapi is closer to the accepted Babylonian form, which probably means “the god Hammu is a healer”.

¹⁴ Alan Milard, “Hammurapi,” in Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan, eds., *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

built a kingdom that operated according to a complex and effective administrative structure and a civilization founded on law and order:

I rooted out the enemy above and below;
I made an end of war;
I promoted the welfare of the land;
I made the people rest in friendly habitations;
I did not let them have anyone terrorize them.
The great gods called me,
So I became the beneficent shepherd whose scepter is righteous,
My benign shadow is spread over my city.
In my bosom I carried the people of the land of Sumer and Akkad;
They prospered under my protection;
I have governed them in peace;
I have sheltered them in my strength.¹⁵

But Hammurapi built an edifice rooted almost entirely in the strength of his own personality and administrative skill and managed his far-reaching bureaucracy personally. After his death, a series of weak successors and local revolts among the peoples he had conquered led to the rapid disintegration of his great Babylonian empire.

Nebuchadrezzar.¹⁶ At the close of the sixth century BCE, the Chaldean king Nabopolassar allied with the Medes to end the brutal and hated Assyrian Empire that had, for three centuries, “caused the world to tremble in fear.” In his epitaph, Nabopolassar wrote:

I slaughtered the land of Subarum (Assyria), I turned the hostile land into heaps and ruins.
The Assyrian, who since distant days had ruled over all the peoples and with his heavy yoke had brought injury to the people of the Land, his feet from Akkad I turned back, his yoke I threw off.¹⁷

The fall of the unlamented Assyrians paved the way for the establishment of a second great Babylonian empire, a Neo-Babylonian age of cultural renaissance, and the last great Mesopotamian empire. Nabopolassar’s son, Nebuchadrezzar (r. 605-562 BCE), proved to be a skillful warrior who expanded the Babylonian empire to the shores of the Mediterranean by conquering Syria and Judea. But conquering Syria proved easier than holding on to it. Constant rebellion drained Babylon’s resources and its king’s energy for

¹⁵ Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 206.

¹⁶ This name is also most often referred to in the Biblical forms, Nebuchadnezzar. The Babylonian form is Nabû-kudurri-usar, which means “the god Nabu has protected the succession.” See Donald J. Wiseman, “Nebuchadrezzar,” in *Oxford Companion to the Bible*.

¹⁷ Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 377.

at least a decade. Nebuchadrezzar earned the eternal mythic enmity of Jews and Christians when, in 597 BCE, he laid siege to Jerusalem, looted the city, destroyed Solomon's Temple, took the king of Judea and thousands of his subjects as prisoners back to Babylon (the "Babylonian captivity"), and forced thousands more into exile in Egypt.

In Iraqi national myth, Nebuchadrezzar is also remembered for rebuilding Babylon as a city-state whose walls, palaces, temples, fortifications, and legendary "hanging gardens" were renowned as wonders of the ancient world. But in his epitaph, Nebuchadrezzar asked recognition not for his military prowess or his public works but for his dedication to law, order, and justice, for his religious devotion, and his moral piety. Little is known of how Nebuchadrezzar ruled once his military campaigns ended; however, by the time he died in 562 BCE the cost of his lavish building projects, ambitious military campaigns, and far-reaching administration had already thrown his empire into financial crisis. Like those of Hammurapi before him, Nebuchadrezzar's conquests began to fall away immediately after his death, and Babylon fell once-and-for-all to the Persians under Cyrus the Great two decades later, in 539 BCE.

Saddam Hussein. Until quite recently, the mythic and historical heroes Gilgamesh, Hammurapi, and Nebuchadrezzar were appreciated more in the West than they were in Iraq. The historical links between ancient Mesopotamia and Islamic Iraq seemed completely broken. In contrast to Egypt, where vestiges of ancient Egyptian religion and cultural practices survived into modern times, no modern cultural or religious traditions seemed to tie modern Iraqi society to its ancient roots. In fact, almost all knowledge of those ancient civilizations had been lost until European and American archeologists began to unearth and decipher their remains during the 19th century.¹⁸

Despite their absence from Iraqi national myth for much of the modern era, these figures are important in understanding Iraq's strategic personality for two reasons. First, they establish that the patterns in Iraq's historical plot that lead to its image as "artificial" and ungovernable reach far back in the history of Mesopotamia / Iraq. From ancient times, its natural wealth, geographic vulnerability, and shared economic and civilizational fortunes contributed to its Sensing orientation and put a premium on strong, often ruthless leaders as the central figures in Mesopotamian / Iraqi political life. At the same time, cultural and tribal diversity and conflicting loyalties were an often irresistibly centrifugal

¹⁸ Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 17-18.

force enabling enemies – both internal and external – to strike fast and causing once powerful empires to collapse quickly. Throughout its history – from ancient Mesopotamia, to the Abbasid Caliphate, to the modern Iraqi Republic – a clear pattern has emerged in Iraq’s historical plot that fostered its Thinking orientation: when the kings were strong and maintained internal order through force and law, civilization thrived; when the kings were ineffectual, civilization crumbled. In this sense, it is possible to draw a straight historical line from Hammurapi to Saddam Hussein.

Which points to the second reason these ancient Mesopotamian heroes are key to understanding modern Iraq’s strategic personality. In modern Iraq, where values and religious and national visions can be so catastrophically divisive, ancient Mesopotamia provides a safe focus for national identity precisely because it is so remote. As tradition without values, Ancient Mesopotamia can tap into a shared source of pride without stirring up dangerous ideologies. Since the 1970s, Saddam Hussein has undertaken to resurrect the Babylonian kings and “reconstruct” their ancient ruins with the dual purpose of promoting the idea of a unique Iraqi national identity “deeply-rooted” in the great Mesopotamian civilizations and shoring up his own cult of personality. Time and again, Saddam has based his claims to Arab leadership on the “fact” that Iraq is the only Gulf Arab country with an ancient tradition of civilizational and cultural greatness.¹⁹ He resorted to this argument to justify the invasion of Kuwait (and to issue an implicit threat to the Saudis) on August 7, 1990:

The wealth centered in one place, in the hands of a minority lacking in cultural depth – or more accurately, having no record of cultural depth. . . . This malicious act resulted in the minority becoming so corrupt that it was cut off from its nation [the Arabs] The wealth in the hands of the minority did not come as a result of legitimate hard work.²⁰

Saddam has also likened himself to Hammurapi and Nebuchadrezzar as a strong, just, and effective leader ruling in the best interest of his people. The comparison is apt in ways Saddam probably did not intend. In his autocratic rule, his ruthless manipulation of local and tribal allies, his employment of “carrots-and-sticks” to build loyalty and fear, and his obsession with internal order and control he stands firmly in the tradition of ancient Mesopotamian kingship. And in his tendency to overreach, his often tragic

¹⁹ May Chartouni-Dubarry, “The Development of Internal Politics in Iraq from 1958 to the Present Day,” in Derek Hopwood, Habib Ishow, and Thomas Koszinowski, eds., *Iraq: Power and Society* (Oxford: St. Anthony’s College, 1993), p. 34.

²⁰ Andreas Rieck, “Iraq and Saudi Arabia: From Rivalry to Confrontation,” in Hopwood, et. al, *Iraq*, pp. 332-333.

hubris, and his brutality, he does not mark any radical departure either from that tradition or from Iraq's Strategic Personality.

4. Iraq's Introverted, Sensing, Thinking Strategic Personality

Iraq is not a “nation-state” in the strictest sense – it has too many competing regional, ethnic, and tribal loyalties to develop a single, unifying sense of national identity. But to say it is not a “nation-state” is not to say that “Iraq” does not have historical and political meaning. In fact, Iraq is an identifiable, oddly cohesive entity with distinguishable Strategic Personality that has roots in the earliest human history. Strong bonds hold Iraq together, but they are not bonds of “patriotism.” Rather, its distinctive character and sense of identity stem from the very notion that its heterogeneity makes it uniquely difficult to rule and, hence, to subjugate. That same pride in its naturally anarchic and independent nature also instills a deep hunger for order. Like the Germans, the Iraqis value order – and are willing to trade individual freedom to get it – precisely because they have so seldom had it. The Iraqi idea of freedom – which values stability, order, and economic development over individual autonomy and political democracy – is central to its Introverted, Sensing, Thinking Strategic Personality and flows directly from the patterns of its historical plot. A few key themes emerge from the long history of Mesopotamia / Iraq that help define both its Strategic Personality and its Ultimate Concerns.

Geography and law unify; ideas and values divide

Most of the misery in Mesopotamian / Iraqi history has come at the hands of outside invaders but followed from the indigenous societies' inability to defend their territorial frontiers, in part because those frontiers were so fluid. It was always easy to define where Mesopotamia / Iraq started – between the rivers – but it was less clear where it ended. So, while modern Iraq itself is not arbitrary, its borders to some extent are. The northern province of Mosul does not exactly fit – a rump of Kurdistan, it was only occasionally associated with either Mesopotamia or Iraq (in particular, during the three-century domination of the Middle East by the Assyrian Empire) and has close historical and cultural ties to Syria and Turkey. The Ba'ath regime has tried to counter this ungainliness by building a sense of identity tied to the concept of a territorial “Great Iraq,” which links all the various ethnic and religious groups in Iraq through their common ties to the golden age of ancient Mesopotamian civilization, including the veneration of the founder of the Assyrian Empire, King Sargon. As Saddam and the Ba'ath see it, only patriotic loyalty to “territorial Iraq” as it is currently defined stands

between the nation and the internal collapse that all Iraqis fear.²¹ But for the foreseeable future, Iraq remains more a territorial community held together by force and will than a political or ideological one held together by shared identity or purpose.

He who controls Iraq's resources controls Iraq. In ancient times, power depended on controlling access to the sources of the water upon which the canals and hence the economy of lower Mesopotamia hinged. During the Caliphate, control of trade routes became the key to Arab political and cultural revival; and when those trade routes began to pass Baghdad by, the power of the Caliphate gradually decayed. In modern times, the vital resource is oil, which finances the means of both internal control and external defense. Kurdish separatism might seem a much less urgent problem if the Kurds did not sit on 40 to 50 percent of Iraq's oil reserves – most of the remainder of which lies under the predominantly Shi'a southeastern part of the country. Control of resources has been more than a strategic concern in Iraq's historical plot – it provides the means to impose order on chaos, enabling the ruler to purchase the patronage and loyalty that are the keys to political power and stability. Resources fuel the economic development that has been the only reliable source of order, if not necessarily cohesion. From ancient times, the inhabitants of Mesopotamia / Iraq have been willing to sacrifice personal freedom for stability; and stability is associated with material well-being and economic development. Controlling the revenue has always allowed central governments in Mesopotamia / Iraq to be strong without being responsive to the impossibly varied aspirations of their people.

In ancient Egypt, the heavy economic reliance on irrigation-based agriculture resulted in a culture deeply rooted in shared values and a culture of cooperation. The historical experience in Iraq was dramatically different. Lacking Egypt's geographic insularity and ethnic homogeneity, Iraq has found values to be a force for division rather than for unity.²² On the other hand, law provides a blueprint that spells out the objectives of society. Law is objective and transcends values. It is possible to be obedient to authority no matter what you believe. Obedience is the measure of Iraqi patriotism.

The Iraqi Shi'a are in this sense loyal, as demonstrated by the fact that the overwhelmingly Shi'ite military rank-and-file remained willing to fight throughout the Iran – Iraq War despite the fact that the war caused disproportionate suffering in the Shi'ite provinces of southern Iraq. The Shi'a also have a presence – albeit not a

²¹ Charles Tripp, "The Iran-Iraq War and the Iraqi State," in Hopwood, et. al., *Iraq*, p. 99.

²² For a full description of Egypt's Strategic Personality, see Ziemke, et. al., *Strategic Personality and the Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence*.

proportionate one – in the Ba’ath Party. Since the era of the Abbasid Caliphate, the Shi’a have disagreed with how the state was run and have struggled to find a political voice – which often put them at odds with the central government – yet their actions reflect more a desire to participate fully in running the country rather than a desire to separate from it.

The Kurds are a different story. Part of Saddam’s logic in revering ancient Mesopotamia as a source of Iraqi national identity was to draw the country’s diverse ethnic communities together, including the Kurds as the descendants of the great ancient Kingdom of Assyria. The regime in Baghdad also used oil revenues to spread social services and economic largesse through the peripheral regions and reinforce their ties to the center by leveling the socio-economic playing field. (Saddam has also, of course, tried to dilute the Kurdish problem by transplanting large numbers of Sunni Arabs into the region to change the demographic balance.) The strategy more-or-less succeeded with the Shi’a, but it failed utterly with the Kurds, who maintained a strong separatist (or at least culturally autonomous) identity. The Kurds have also maintained strong ties to the transnational Kurdish independence movement, in violation of Iraqi laws against foreign political ties. During the Iran – Iraq and the 1991 Persian Gulf Wars the Kurds were not only not treated as loyal participants in the national struggle, they were virtual belligerents, most tragically as the victims of Iraqi mustard gas attacks in 1988.

What all this geography and law and order come down to is an Iraqi nationalism that defines itself in much more concrete, process-oriented terms than is common among European nationalist philosophies. Like the Nazis in Germany, Ba’athists in Iraq sought to restore the “flesh and blood, color and taste” to national identity. In Iraqi Ba’athist ideology, Islam provides the moral and cultural absolute according to which all Iraqis are expected to live. To internalize the moral order is to become an Iraqi. Ba’athism is neither value oriented – as was Nasserism – nor clericalized and visionary – as is Iranian Islamism. As Elias Farah, a chief Ba’athist ideologist, once explained:

Ba’athism is a secular philosophy, but it is not anti-clerical, as secular ideas tend to be in Europe. It does not reject Islam. It could not. Islam is not just a religion, like Christianity. It is our civilization. It has forged the unity of the Arab world. . . . Ba’athism’s goal is to strike a balance between cultural authenticity, of which Islam is the central element, and modernity. What we cannot accept is abuse of power by religion for political ends.²³

²³ As quoted by Milton Viorst, in *Sandcastles: The Arabs in Search of the Modern World* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995), p. 29.

Legitimacy derives from the state's ability to impose and maintain order

Ba'athist ideology is also distinct from other Pan-Arab nationalist credos – such as Egypt's Nasserism – in its drive to organize and control every aspect of Iraqi life, including how people think.²⁴ In the Ba'athist view, the Iraqi entity is bound together by the quest for order and stability. The Iraqi nation cannot exist without the structure of the Iraqi state, an organic entity in which individuals have no moral significance or identity except as members of that concrete structure.

The historical plot of Mesopotamia / Iraq taught the clear lesson that force and patronage are more effective than compromise and consensus-building in imposing order. Hammurapi built an economic infrastructure to support his later imperial conquests. In modern times, state-control of oil revenues enabled government to become the major employer; sanctions and rationing since have only served to increase that control. During the 1970s, Saddam Hussein built legitimacy for his regime by building a modern Iraq, and on the eve of the Iran – Iraq War, Iraqis enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the Arab world. “Iraq has become a consumer society,” Iraqis were fond of boasting in the late 1970s, “We have been spoiled with the good life, a lot of money, and no poverty.”²⁵ Iraq’s literacy rates jumped from around 15 percent in 1958 to well over 50 percent by the early 1980s, and women were included in education and the professions to a degree almost unprecedented in the Islamic world. But the Ba’ath Party is an elite movement that has never tried to forge emotional ties with masses, and the economic and developmental perquisites were always balanced with a healthy dose of repression and brutality. When hard times – first the Iran – Iraq War, later the Persian Gulf War and UN sanctions – strained the state’s ability to maintain the economic benefits, the loss was offset by increased violence and repression. The overall goal throughout was – in good times and bad – to impose order from above, not to earn affection from below.

The Ba’ath regime has managed to translate its stability and durability into an engine for political legitimacy.²⁶ Since the creation of the modern Iraqi state, authority has been highly personalized. Despite his foreign origins and the taint of British patronage, King Faisal I was able to build a degree of authority and legitimacy by establishing effective ties with tribal sheiks, but his successors were less effective and

²⁴ Makiya, *Republic of Fear*, p. 103.

²⁵ Sandra Mackey, *Passion and Politics: The Turbulent World of the Arabs* (New York: Plume, 1994), p. 338.

²⁶ Makiya, *Republic of Fear*, p. 149.

Iraq collapsed into a cycle of coups and counter-coups. But even in ancient Mesopotamia, periods of order and stability were most often associated with the reign of a single king or leader. Authority and legitimacy, because it so often relied on the power, skill, and ruthlessness of one ruler, seldom passed smoothly from one ruler to the next. While Saddam Hussein's Stalinistic cult of personality may prove somewhat unique, it is safe to assume that whatever leader from whatever clan takes over after Saddam's demise will strive to maintain the state structure that had served him and the Ba'ath Party so well. Saddam has made certain that whatever sense of collective Iraqi identity exists is invested in him, so like him, his successor will have to build his own structure of patronage, personal loyalty, obligation, and fear as the foundation of cohesion and order in Iraq.

Iraq is unique. It is in the Arab world, but not of it

Most of the rest of the Arab world is homogenous – Sunni, and ethnically and linguistically Arab. Iraq is almost uniquely diverse not only confessionally – Sunnis and Shi'a – but ethnically – Arabs and Kurds. The vast majority Shi'a in Iraq are ethnically Arab (most of the Shi'a of Persian descent were expelled or fled during earlier purges), but they are suspicious of Arab nationalism because of its predominantly Sunni character. Iraq's historical and cultural ties to Persia are as strong and of longer duration than its ties to the rest of the Arab world. For significant stretches of its history, Iraq was ruled by Persian Sultans. Iraq remains the least Arab-speaking of the Arab states – roughly 75 percent of Iraqis speak Arabic as their first language, the rest speak Kurdish, Turkish, or Farsi. And Iraqi Arabic is heavily laced with adaptations from those minority tongues.²⁷ The holiest shrines of Shi'a Islam – the tombs of the martyr Imams 'Ali and Hussein at Karbala and Najaf – reside in Iraq. Much of the deep cultural suspicion and hostility between Iraq and Iran is attributable not to how different they are, but to their desire to deny their commonality and shared history. Iraq's drive to establish its Arab *bona fides* stems in large part from the need to establish its unique identity by distancing itself from its heavily Persian-influenced past.

Arab unity is sometimes a national interest of Iraq's, but it is not an Ultimate Concern. Iraq's influence in the Arab world has always been limited by the extent to which Iraqi regimes must devote state attention and energy to maintaining internal control. This sense of uniqueness is reflected in the Ba'athist concept of Arab nationalism, which rejects the notion of a single, overarching Arab "nation-state;" rather,

²⁷ Mackey, *Passion and Politics*, p. 317.

as Farah explained, “Ba’athism’s position is that Arab unity has always been enriched by diversity,” a position that enables Iraq to tout its Arab nationalist credentials while pursing policies concerned primarily with the objectives of the Iraqi state.²⁸ Iraqis have always taken a certain pride in their ability to support themselves. This tendency has been reinforced since the 1991 Gulf War; the fact that Iraq has been able to overcome their former dependence on foreigners and even their fellow Arabs and rebuild their military and economic infrastructure has become a source of great national pride.

5. Iraq’s Strategic Outlook

Iraq’s historical vulnerability to invasion and internal devolution has conditioned Iraq’s Introverted and Sensing orientations and made territorial security one of its Ultimate Concerns. Such invasions tended not only to inflict political humiliation on Iraq, but they also brought widespread social and economic collapse. Having suffered through periods of economic decline and social disorder that often lasted centuries, Iraq also regards the maintenance of internal social cohesion and basic economic order as another of its Ultimate Concerns. Both of these Ultimate Concerns depend on a third: the establishment of a strong, centralized state structure that can enforce “law and order” in what Iraqis regard as their inherently disorderly society. The ancient Mesopotamians and modern Iraqis alike did not need to love, or even to trust their rulers; but they needed to know that their state could keep the economic infrastructure upon which the physical well-being of the population depended (the canals in ancient Mesopotamia, the oil infrastructure in modern Iraq) functioning and in good repair. Iraq’s strategic experience has instilled in it a belief that the outside world is dangerous, hostile, and ready to carve off the disparate bits of ethnically and religiously diverse territorial Iraq. This has instilled another Ultimate Concern: avoiding hostile encirclement by asserting Iraq’s material, cultural, and strategic superiority. In particular, Iraq has been obsessed with establishing its distinctiveness from and superiority to Persia – with which it shared long stretches of its political and cultural history – but also to the rest of the Arab world. Iraq has participated in the Arab nationalist movement from decidedly defensive motives – to assert Iraqi uniqueness, superiority, and dominance.

Iraq’s Strategic Personality and Ultimate Concerns give it a strategic orientation dominated by territorial defensiveness bordering on paranoia and an imperative to establish and maintain internal political order and cohesion through a strong, centralized,

²⁸ Viorst, *Sandcastles*, p. 30.

and when necessary authoritarian state structure. Nothing in Iraq's historical plot leads it to trust outsiders (even fellow Arabs) to defend its national survival, never mind protect its Ultimate Concerns. Iraqi governments thus participate in international fora if and only if they see a direct benefit to Iraq's territorial security or internal cohesion. The Arab nationalist movement is a case in point. Status, whether rooted in cultural superiority (respect) or military dominance (fear), is an important source of national identity, cohesion, and state legitimacy. Iraqi leaders have periodically attempted to seize leadership of the Pan-Arab movement as a springboard for such status. But when another Arab state has de facto leadership – as has often been the case with Egypt over the years – the Iraqis withdraw. And even as participants in the Arab nationalist movement, Iraq puts its own national character and national interests first. The desire to keep the destructive and disruptive forces of the outside world at bay dominates the Iraqi Strategic Personality. Ideally, Iraq would prefer to be an autarky, but its strategic vulnerability and heavy dependence on imports for key resources (Iraq has, for example, no major domestic source of industrial metal ores) make that impossible. If Iraq must interact with the outside world, it will strive to do so in a way that enables the state to control the scope, extent, nature, and internal impact of such interaction at all times.

B. THE SCENARIO

1. Historical Background

Iraq first began asserting an historical claim to Kuwait as its “19th province” in 1939, at a time when social unrest within the emirate made it a vulnerable takeover target. Iraq reasserted that claim in 1961, triggering a stand-off with the Arab League that ended with that organization guaranteeing Kuwait's independence and sovereignty in an effort to “contain” Iraqi influence and limit its ability to challenge the dominance of the Egyptian / Syrian United Arab Republic. The Iraqis base their claim on the fact that Kuwait had historically been part of the Ottoman province of Basra, which is now universally recognized as an integral part of territorial Iraq. The rich Saudi oil fields at al-Hasa, just south of Kuwait, were also once part of the Ottoman province of Basra and have thus been in the Iraqis' sights as well. Iraq charges that the severance of Kuwait violated the “natural boundaries” of Iraq and was part of a conspiracy to restrict its access to the Persian Gulf and hence counter its natural position of strategic and economic dominance in the Arab world.

The historical reality is somewhat different. Under pressure from the first wave of fundamentalist Wahhabi expansion on the Arabian peninsula during the 18th century, the

tribe Banu ‘Utub left their home territory in the Najd and sought refuge along the coast of the Persian Gulf, finally settling near a natural harbor that had long been a way-station for coastal caravans. Here, the Banu ‘Utub built a walled town called Kuwait and established a thriving economy based on fishing, pearl-diving, and trade with Bedouin and European trading posts along the coast. The three chief families of the Banu ‘Utub divided responsibility for governing Kuwait: the Khalifas administered the coastal trade, the Jalahimas oversaw the seafaring trades, and the Sabah’s ran the government. Sabah bin Jabr of the Banu (clan) ‘Utub became the first Emir of Kuwait in 1752²⁹ – making the Al-Sabah family one of the oldest continually governing regimes in the Gulf region – but all the important decisions were decided by consensus among all the Banu ‘Utub.³⁰ Over time, the emirate evolved into a sort of constitutional oligarchy that presided over the Arab world’s first home-grown “democracy.”³¹

Long before the discovery of rich oil deposits in the emirate, Kuwait was a thriving, urban entrepôt at the headwaters of the Persian Gulf and the center for trade between India and the Mediterranean, but it was also vulnerable. Kuwait came under periodic attack by puritanical Wahhabi tribesmen (who eventually came to dominate Saudi Arabia) and had long depended upon the British for protection. When the East India Company pulled out of Kuwait, the al-Sabahs recognized that there was little hope of resisting the inevitable move by the Ottoman Empire to take over the emirate; so to avoid a traumatic invasion and military occupation, the emirate accepted *pro forma* Ottoman sovereignty over the emirate in 1871. In practice, the emirate retained its independence and continued to operate much as it had for nearly a century and a half.

Kuwait had a long-established economic bond with the Iraqi port at Basra, and under the Ottomans became an administrative appendage of the province of Basra. But because Kuwait had been a recognized political entity for so long, it was not included in the post-World War I system of League of Nations mandates, but instead immediately regained its autonomy (although the British empire maintained an official presence there until 1963). It is true enough that the British could have appended Kuwait to Iraq and that they chose not to do so for their own strategic and economic reasons; it does not follow,

²⁹ The nature of the government in Kuwait – one based on consensus and compromise rather than top-down control – is reflected in the fact that Kuwait’s head-of-state is an *emir* (chief, prince, or governor in Arabic) rather than a king.

³⁰ Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, pp. 670, 678-679.

³¹ Viorst, *Sandcastles*, p. 237; Kuwait is, of course, a democracy in the classical sense of Greece and Rome; democracy for Kuwaitis does not extend to the emirate’s non-Kuwaiti guest workers who cannot gain citizenship status and who enjoy few legal rights.

however, legally or logically, that Kuwait is a “natural” province of Iraq; there were never any particular historical or cultural ties between the two countries. The treaty establishing Kuwait’s border with Iraq did, however, favor Kuwait by awarding it the islands of Warbah and Bubiyan, which traditionally had been tied to the security of Basra.³²

The crisis that ended with the invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990 had its roots in the long, bloody Iran – Iraq War of 1980-1988. The war had taken a devastating toll on Iraq’s economy and infrastructure. Iraq had roughly \$15 billion in annual oil revenues with which to rebuild its economy and service its nearly \$80 billion in foreign war debt. By early 1990, some of Iraq’s creditors – particularly Japan and the Soviet Union – had cut off further credit until Iraq could begin to pay back what it already owed. Iraq owed the biggest chunk of debt – about \$35 billion – to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The Saudis had come to the realization that the debt was hopeless and were quietly erasing it from their books; but the Kuwaitis would continue to press for payment. In January 1990, Saddam insisted that Kuwait and the Saudis not only forgive the old debt but advance additional funds to help Iraq rebuild and jump-start its lagging economy. To do so, he argued, was an obligation incurred when the Gulf Arabs allowed Iraq to save them “from the Persian danger by the blood of the Iraqi people.”³³ As the tension mounted in late July 1990, the Saudis tried to broker some sort of agreement between Kuwait and Iraq on the debt issue, but those attempts failed and Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2. Its goals were threefold: to gain access to Kuwait’s rich oil reserves, to secure for Iraq the strategically vital offshore islands as protection for the planned deep water naval port at Umm Qasr at the mouth of the Shatt al-Arab, and to establish for Iraq by force the position of Arab leadership it had failed to secure through diplomacy and politics.

The 1990-91 Coalition against Iraq has gradually disintegrated over the past decade, especially among the Arab states. The Saudis had hoped, from the beginning, that US military presence on Saudi soil would end very soon after the war ended, and have shifted more and more of the burden of the continuing presence onto Kuwait. The Gulf Arabs are also increasingly uncomfortable with the humanitarian implications of the ongoing sanctions regime. The forces causing the Arabs gradually to drift away from the anti-Iraq position were exacerbated by the renewed Israeli – Palestinian violence which has once again awakened pan-Arab anti-Zionism and distanced them from the US. But

³² Habib Ishow, “Relations between Iraq and Kuwait,” in Hopwood, et. al., *Iraq*, pp. 304-310.

³³ Rieck, “Iraq and Saudi Arabia,” in Hopwood et. al., *Iraq*, p. 329.

the Arabs are not the only defectors; over the past few years France and Germany have also increasingly pressed for a timetable to end sanctions, arguing less that they are inhumane than that they simply have no chance of working. The point of sanctions, their opponents argue, was to force Iraq to open its military facilities to international inspections and destroy its nascent WMD capabilities. That has been done, or has been done to the extent that is realistically possible, so sanctions no longer have any legal justification and are standing in the way of Iraq reviving its economy and repaying its prewar debts. International NGOs have also entered the fray, and some are now conducting relief efforts in Iraq in direct contravention of sanctions and travel restrictions. Bush administration efforts to restructure sanctions and the oil-for-food-and-medicine regime were voted down in the UN in 2001, and signs are increasing that the international mandate for continuing the sanctions will dissolve before too much longer. US and British public opinion may grow impatient with the cost of operations enforcing the “no-fly zone” as the other elements of postwar controls on Iraq collapse.

2. The Scenario

Seven years from now, Iraq finds itself in a flurry of transitions. Saddam Hussein died three years earlier, of natural causes, and the Presidency of Iraq passed to his son Qusay. His elder son and long the presumptive heir, Uday, had never fully recovered from the severe injuries he received in an assassination attempt in December 1996 and was deemed too weak and mentally unreliable to oversee and maintain the complex web of patronage that his father had built over the years. Qusay, however, never managed either to master his father’s networking skills and ability to enlist the loyalty of his minions or to emulate his fearsome reputation. He had managed to maintain the loyalty of most Tikritis, who had been the cornerstone of Saddam’s power, but secretly some of them doubted his longevity. Perceiving the edifice of state control gradually crumbling away, a coalition of rival clans made a bid for control of the Ba’ath Party and, after a bloody “gang war,” managed to force Qusay out of power and establish a new regime – still Ba’athist, but no longer uniformly Tikriti. The Iraqi National Congress threw its hat into the ring, but found itself hopelessly tainted by rumors of its association with the CIA. It was seen as a “Western-puppet” regime with little popular support among Iraqis deeply embittered by over a decade of sanctions and state propaganda that placed the blame for shortages and suffering squarely on the shoulders of the US and British. Tariq Aziz, the Tallyrand of Iraq, signed on as the foreign minister for the new regime, along with a few other key figures (including a handful of Tikritis), bringing the Army on board and lending the new leadership a degree of legitimacy and continuity. Aziz immediately

began currying favor with potentially friendly foreign powers and influential individuals – France, Germany, Russia, China, the Secretary General of the United Nations, and even a few key US pundits – and had considerable success with his “Saddam made us do it” apologies.

Once it became apparent that the Hussein dynasty had ended for good, the last vestiges of support for what was left of the post-1991 sanctions regime crumbled away. While the US maintained a slightly reduced military presence in Kuwait, it ended its air operations to enforce the “no fly zone” under domestic political pressure to decrease the op-tempo of still over-committed US forces. International contractors were free to do business in Iraq, its oil was now freely traded on the international market, and the country seemed poised to undertake a flurry of rebuilding and badly needed modernization of its economic infrastructure – especially of its out-of-date and sorely neglected oil production facilities. The new regime initially launched a charm campaign to foster better relations with its Arab neighbors. Over time, however, the Iraqis grew impatient with what they saw as an inordinately slow pace of international aid and artificially low oil prices that were preventing Iraq from seeing much improvement in its economic situation. The IMF, World Bank, and other international banks placed intolerable restrictions on their aid packages, and apart from substantial humanitarian aid, most international businesses demanded cash-on-the-barrelhead. Iraq remained, it seemed, a bad financial risk.

The Crisis

The new Iraqi regime finally turns to its fellow Arabs for support, as Saddam had during the economic crisis in the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq War, and despite the appearance of goodwill meets with more or less the same results. After repeated efforts to win over the Gulf Arab states to a “pan-Arab recovery program for Iraq” fail, Iraq’s attention turns once again to that shining gem in the desert, the oil fields along Kuwait’s northern border with Iraq. Iraqi special forces launch an incursion to seize Kuwait’s largest oil facility at Burqan under cover of darkness on the night of the new moon. The operation, timed to coincide with a “dark period” in US satellite reconnaissance, is completed in a few hours. The Iraqi regime claims that the invading forces are independent “insurgents” operating without government sanction, but offers to resolve the crisis in exchange for a “profit-sharing” arrangement with Kuwait.

The Iraqis also suggest to the al-Sabah regime that the Kuwaitis would be better off if they sever their military alliance with the US and accept an Iraqi “protectorate.” As a symbol of its ability to enforce its “protection” and to discourage the US from

reinforcing its military presence in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the Iraqi army releases film footage to CNN of an alleged nuclear-armed SCUD launcher positioned just north of the Kuwaiti border. The missile itself is capable of reaching US forces in Camp Doha, and although the SCUDs proved notoriously inaccurate during the Persian Gulf War, if armed with an air-burst nuclear warhead, this one would not have to be very accurate to have fearsome effects. Some months earlier, seismic and satellite intelligence data indicated some kind of underground explosions in Iraq, but the US intelligence community decided the information was inconclusive and determined that if there had been a nuclear test, it had failed. Still, the Iraqi claims of having a nuclear-armed, mobile SCUD – tested or untested – within range of US forces and Kuwaiti and Saudi civilians are credible if not yet confirmed and have to be taken at face value.

3. Balance of Ultimate Concerns and Strategic Personalities

Iraq's Ultimate Concerns: The Center Must Hold

In the aftermath of a regime change and a bloody power struggle, the new Ba'athist regime retains a tenuous hold on the intricate patronage network that is the foundation of Iraq's state edifice. Legitimacy will ultimately come from two sources: the clear and effective exercise of power, and longevity. If it is to solidify its control, the new regime will have to demonstrate its muscle, both internally and externally. Much of Saddam's internal legitimacy derived from his decisiveness in challenging the Iranian threat in 1980 and the Western aggression in 1990 – even the peripheral groups that usually kept their distance from the regime in Baghdad (including the Shi'a in the south) rallied around the regime to fight off foreign aggression. Saddam's ability to wait out the Western-led coalition after 1991 earned him mythic status. The 1991 War and the subsequent hardships brought on by sanctions to “starve Iraq into submission” became a powerfully unifying shared national trauma and moral victory. For the first time, Iraqis had a unifying source of national identity – together, the steadfast Iraqis had stood up to Western aggression, and prevailed.

The lesson for the new Iraqi regime is clear: power and perseverance are a source of national unity; values and “vision” create unnecessary internal divisions. Thus, the regime sees the possibility of a huge internal political payoff if it can once again flout attempts by the West to manipulate and constrain Iraq, preferably in a way that does not invite another “Mother of all Defeats.” The new regime's anti-Western, autarkic public rhetoric has considerable popular appeal, both inside Iraq and in the broader Arab community. “We stood up to the American bombers alone in 1991 and survived; we

endured the isolation of the US-engineered sanctions regime and not only survived, but managed to rebuild our broken country; we can prevail without outside help today,” is a theme that resonates in the Iraqi popular imagination. But these sentiments will get the Iraqi regime only so far – it also needs to deliver some concrete improvements in the economic and social conditions of the Iraqi people (especially the elites upon whom the regime’s continuing power depends) if it is to achieve the longevity and stability that, in Iraq, translates into legitimacy.

The regime faces two challenges in reviving Iraq’s long-moribund economy. First, Iraq’s antiquated and badly dilapidated oil production facilities cannot possibly produce enough crude to enable its economy to hold steady – never mind to grow. The long and unjust sanctions regime kept Iraq’s income artificially low, even after it ended, and has put the country at an unfair and unnatural economic disadvantage that promises to be permanent if the regime does not take some drastic steps. One solution would be to bust OPEC price and production quotas to earn some fast cash, but present production constraints limit Iraq’s ability to do so. Iraqi technicians – long out of the technical and educational loop because of travel restrictions – cannot modernize the country’s petroleum production infrastructure on their own, and bringing in foreign contractors costs money. And few foreign contractors – even ones from “politically correct” countries like China and Russia – will work in Iraq on credit. Second, the Iraqi regime is reluctant to let in too many outsiders with their loans and foreign investments for fear that doing so would weaken internal control even further. The Iraqis remember what happened in China in the 1980s and 1990s when the Communist regime began to allow capitalism and foreign investment in China – foreign money also brought dangerous foreign ideas about democracy and human rights. Even an entrenched and resilient regime like the PRC nearly buckled under the pressure; a replay of Tiananmen in Baghdad would be catastrophic for an insecure Iraqi regime.

That British colonial administrators “stole” the emirate, its oil reserves, and the offshore islands of Warbah and Bubiyan has become a cherished element of Iraqi national myth. As it did in 1990, this sense of historical injustice grates in the Iraqi national psyche more than usual in this time of trial. The Kuwaiti oil fields are, by historical right, actually Iraqi fields and thus fair game. Saddam Hussein had renounced any claim to Kuwait as part of the terms of the cease-fire in 1991, but the new regime does not feel legally compelled to honor an unjust pledge made under duress. Moreover, the intent is not to annex all of Kuwait, but merely to appropriate a tiny – if lucrative – part of it and share the proceeds with the emirate. Iraq also remains convinced that the

eventual goal of US and Iranian policy in the region is the partitioning of Iraq into an autonomous Kurdish state, a Shi'a state aligned with Iran, and a rump (and emasculated) Iraqi state with little reach beyond Baghdad.

So, in order to build internal legitimacy and consolidate its tenuous control, the new Iraqi regime needs rapid and dramatic economic growth (which is unlikely under present circumstances), and some unifying external crisis to rejuvenate Iraq's unifying national myth of steadfastness in the face of Western and Zionist hostility. The crisis over the Burqan oil field seems to kill two birds with one stone: the ultra-modern, well-maintained Kuwaiti fields can more than make up the production shortfall until Iraq can get its own facilities back in shape; and the regime can establish its internal nationalist *bona fides* by righting an historical wrong in the face of Western opposition. Provided the Americans do not come back with their bombers and tanks, the Iraqi regime believes it can't lose. And their "secret weapon," the nuclear-armed SCUD missile, can assure that the American tank divisions and fighter wings don't come back. Moreover, watching the surprise when the Americans learn that the Iraqis have managed to assemble at least one nuclear weapon, in spite of sanctions and without the CIA-Mossad intelligence juggernaut discovering and destroying it, will be a powerful rallying point for Iraqi national pride and could further solidify the regime's internal support.

Iraq's Ultimate Concerns: Defending Territorial Iraq

Iraq's fellow Arabs – and even, to some extent, the hated Iranians –gradually warmed to Saddam Hussein as sanctions dragged on and the devastating cost to the Iraqi population tweaked their Islamic consciences. But now that Iraq is free to pursue its own national agenda more or less unimpeded, they are once again looking at it with a wary eye. The Saudis, Kuwaitis, and Bahrainis are the most nervous, poised as they are on the "front lines," and are once again looking to the US to balance Iraq in the event that it manages to rebuild its former military dominance in the region. Iran is also unlikely to go happily along with the idea of a reconstituted and unconstrained Iraqi military capability. The regime in Iran has continued its gradual process of reform and liberalization, and as it does so, its relations with the United States have seen very slow but steady improvement. The specter of strategic encirclement looms in the form of a de facto US – Iran – GCC alignment to "contain" (which to the Iraqis means "constrict") Iraq.

The new Iraqi regime perceives an immediate risk that the Kurdish separatists will take advantage of its vulnerability to press their separatist agenda. The Shah had agreed in the 1975 Algiers accords not to support Kurdish insurgents inside Iraq, but the Islamic

regime might not feel compelled to honor that agreement. And there is always the CIA, which had meddled in Kurdish affairs after the 1991 war and might choose to do so again if it perceives the new regime as weak and vulnerable. So far, the Shi'a in the south, at least, have remained quiescent; and the new regime has taken steps to keep them that way, putting prominent Ba'athist Shi'a in important positions in the regime and trying to forge ties with local Shi'a political leaders. The Shi'a clerics, however, remain wary of the Ba'athist regime and are keeping their distance, creating yet another nagging internal vulnerability. The possibility that they would join forces with their coreligionists in Iran and attempt to trigger some sort of Islamist revolt in Iraq is remote, but one the new regime cannot afford to ignore.

At the same time that it perceives a rising threat to territorial security from encirclement by hostile outside powers and partition by restive Kurds and Shi'a, Iraq finds its capabilities badly out of balance. Its conventional capabilities deteriorated sharply as a result of the 1991 war and subsequent sanctions, which has created a serious internal vulnerability. A major Kurdish or Shi'a uprising could deplete them even more and leave Iraq defenseless against either internal or external challengers. In addition, the Iraqi regime is concerned that Iran's veritable "détente" with the US will afford it the leeway to strengthen its military presence in the Persian Gulf region and might even embolden it to resume its policy of meddling in Iraq's tenuous internal ethnic and religious milieu.

Nuclear weapons can even the balance by multiplying Iraqi military power vis-à-vis the US and its likely "allies." In Saddam's last years, his regime managed to cobble together one or two nuclear warheads that it could mount on the old mobile SCUD missiles. The capability remains untested, the missiles have only a short range, they are inaccurate, and the SCUDs were unreliable in their prime and are almost certainly more so now. Still, as a deterrent the Iraqi "bomb" could do the trick and will almost certainly level the operational playing field vis-à-vis both Iran and the US. The Iraqis learned from their experience in the Iran – Iraq War. They are convinced it was their use of chemical weapons against Iranian-occupied Kurdish territories, against Iranian forces on the Fao Peninsula, and the threat to use them again against Iranian border towns that convinced the Ayatollah Khomeini to accept the cease-fire in 1988. Since they had shown the willingness and resolve to employ weapons of mass destruction before, the Iraqi regime is confident that potential opponents cannot doubt their willingness to do so again.

Iraq's Ultimate Concerns: Status and Tribal Honor.

Of course, the new regime would like to eventually restore Iraq to its rightful position of prominence in the Arab world, but for now, holding the line against internal and external threats to national cohesion until the regime can consolidate its internal control is a much higher priority. Still, the perception that the new regime is reinstalling Iraq in its rightful place among the Arabs can only help that process by 1) rallying internal political support for the regime, and 2) mobilizing the anti-Western sentiment on “the street” in the broader Arab world, making it difficult for other Arab states to sign on to a new, US-led, anti-Iraq coalition. Saddam managed to earn some pan-Arab points with his financial and political support of Yassir Arafat’s Palestinian National Authority during the Al-Aqsa Intifada of 2000-2001. As Iraq emerged from under the sanctions regime, however, whatever good graces it earned in the eyes of Arab leaders failed to translate into permanent trust and goodwill. As before, the Iraqis chafed at Arab ingratitude – they owed Iraq a debt for saving them from the Iranian Islamist plague; yet they repaid it with treachery. The Iraqi regime wants respect, but it will settle for a measure of vengeance. If Iraq can manage to look internally unified and militarily strong, then goodwill and gratitude might not matter – if respect won’t buy Iraq the status it deserves in the Persian Gulf region, fear might. After all, Iraq has never been a defeated power.

The real target of Iraqi *revanchism*, however, is not its fellow Arab states but the West, specifically the US and Britain. The scars remaining after over ten years of sanctions have left deep and bitter anti-Western resentments throughout the Iraqi Arab population – Sunni and Shi'a alike. The Shi'a bear additional rancor over their “abandonment” by the US in 1991 that exposed them to the terrible wrath of Saddam Hussein. The few European powers that supported lifting sanctions – France, Germany, Russia – did so, it turns out, largely in order that they could begin to make good their old debts. Once it became apparent that the new regime was in no position to repay those debts (and showed little inclination to do so), their enthusiasm for the “new Iraq” waned. They have not rushed into Iraq waving their checkbooks. These scars not only make the prospect of rapprochement with the West unlikely any time soon, they also create an additional hunger for some degree of revenge in order to restore Iraq’s national honor. Thus, for the new regime, there is much more political capital to be earned by adopting a strong anti-Western posture that appeals to Iraqi pride in their ability to rebuild their country and restore its pan-Arab leadership without outside help.

The Iraqi regime believes it tried playing by the international community's rules and didn't get very far for its trouble. Sanctions have ended and Saddam Hussein has died, yet Iraq is still treated (and, they suspect, viewed) as either a rogue or, worse, just a hopeless basket-case. It is time to play by Iraq's rules; there would certainly be no public outcry in Iraq for restraint in the use of Iraq's nukes.

But for the new Iraqi regime as for the old one, the bottom line is that strategic realities and logic in the Persian Gulf region make conflict with the West inevitable. Iraq sees itself as the natural cultural and strategic hegemon on the Arab side of the Persian Gulf and the natural leader of the Arab world. Iraq combines an ancient and venerable cultural tradition (which Egypt also has) with vast economic resources and Arab nationalist credentials untainted by collaboration with the West and Israel (both of which Egypt does not have). As long as the West seeks to maintain its imperialist domination of the region, keep the Arabs divided and weak, and shore up the Zionist state, Iraq will remain their steadfast enemy. Iraq's military and economic potential have for too long been artificially constrained by the West and its regional clients, and Iraq believes it has every right to assume its rightful place in the Arab world and restore the region to its "natural," rational balance.

US Ultimate Concerns

This scenario triggers any number of US values and interests – human rights and democratization in Iraq, alliance relationships with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Israel, economic interests in maintaining a stable oil market, nonproliferation (such an event would almost certainly motivate Israel and Iran to go overtly nuclear, if they had not already and might lead Egypt and Saudi Arabia to entertain the option), and national pride (once again, the US intelligence establishment has suffered a nasty, and this time strategically devastating, nonproliferation surprise) – just to name a few. But in calculating the relative credibility and effectiveness of US deterrence options, the stand-off boils down to two key US Ultimate Concerns: the long-standing US vision to build a world system in which national differences are resolved peacefully and in which aggression as a tool of state policy (either internal or external) is not tolerated, and the even longer-standing concern with maintaining US global strategic, political, and economic freedom-of-action.

The Iraqi regime has tried to work around the first US Ultimate Concern – upholding the global non-aggression norm – by structuring its strategy in this crisis in such a way that the seizure of the Kuwait oil facilities is not, to its legalistic way of

thinking, an unambiguous act of aggression on its part. For the US, the first danger is that Iraq's nervous neighbors – Kuwait and Saudi Arabia – who stand to suffer the brunt of an Iraqi nuclear attack, might be inclined to go along with Iraq's strategic logic and opt to back away from their alignment with the US. China might also accept the Iraqi logic, seeing in it justification for its own seizure of disputed territories like Tibet or Taiwan and might move to block any UN sanction of a cooperative military response. Among other US allies, Britain would be likely to support the US position; other 1991 coalition partners might be harder to convince that a major military response is called for, particularly if the Iraqi nuclear ploy is couched as other than an overt threat to attack US forces in the region. All this notwithstanding, the US must pursue its “global non-aggression” Ultimate Concern in this case for two reasons: first, because there is little doubt that if this Iraqi move is allowed to stand unchallenged, the Saudi oil fields will almost certainly fall next; and second, because not to do so will severely and perhaps irreparably constrict US strategic freedom-of-action.

It is ultimately this second US Ultimate Concern – maintaining global strategic freedom of action – that is most threatened in this scenario. If the US does not stand its ground in this case (even in the face of “reluctance” on the part of its regional allies), its credibility in the region (and other regions as well) will be severely damaged. Iraq would effectively have succeeded in establishing itself as a regional hegemon through nuclear blackmail. To set such a precedent would prove devastating to this most vital US Ultimate Concern. Although the Iraqi nuclear weapons could not strike American territory, if they succeeded in causing the US to withdraw from a long-term and vital strategic commitment, the damage to US economic well-being could be substantial over time. The US is likely to recognize the degree to which its Ultimate Concerns are at risk, and may even see that Iraq's Ultimate Concerns are also heavily invested in the outcome of the crisis. What US policymakers might not see (especially given the “subtleties” of Iraq's strategy) is the degree and nature of the threat to Iraq's Ultimate Concerns and may, thus, miss important deterrence and crisis resolution options. The Extroverted US may assume that years of isolation and sanctions have eroded Iraq's resolve and staying power. In fact, the opposite is likely to be the case; the shared trauma of disease, shortages, and starvation may have solidified popular support for the Ba'ath regime by legitimizing its view that the West is conspiring to keep Iraq weak and poor.

Perceptions and Misconceptions

So, the US has a vital stake in the outcome of the crisis; but does Iraq recognize the degree to which the US sees its Ultimate Concerns at risk? Will a US deterrent be credible? Most likely not; at least, not initially. The Iraqi regime risked fomenting the crisis in the first place because it believes its very survival was at stake. While the regime will certainly understand, based on its long experience with US “containment” strategy, that the US is committed to keeping Iraq weak, it may not grasp the US Ultimate Concerns that are the underlying causes of that determination. In particular, Iraq’s Introverted, Sensing, Thinking Strategic Personality is likely to lead it to a number of potentially dangerous misconceptions concerning US motivations:

- The new Iraqi regime is likely to have latched on to the standard US rhetoric that its quarrel all along was with Saddam Hussein and not with the “Iraqi people,” and its Sensing orientation predisposes it to take this more literally than the Intuitive, Feeling United States really intends it. While the regime knows that this reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of Iraqi politics – that Saddam Hussein’s goals were, in fact, perfectly consistent with Iraq’s goals – it also believes it has a substantial “grace period” before the US and the other Western powers catch on to that fact. Aziz’s “charm offensive” has made inroads in world opinion, and there are signs that the US is reducing its vigilance, waiting for signs of “moderation” or “democratization” in war-weary Iraq, and assumes that the new regime cannot mount overt aggression without “popular legitimacy.”
- US conduct in later crises in Somalia and Kosovo likely convinced the Iraqis that Saddam Hussein’s mistake in 1991 was one of execution, not of conception. Iraq’s Sensing and Thinking orientations predispose it to expect consistency and to conclude that there is an absolute threshold of US casualty tolerance that will apply in every case. The “Vietnam analogy” was a key input into Saddam’s strategic calculus in 1990; but as it turned out, Iraqi forces in that war were simply not able to inflict sufficient pain and humiliation on the Americans to undermine their weak national will. Iraq is now confident that its nuclear weapons can solve that problem. The death of just a few soldiers forced the Clinton administration to pull out of Somalia; and US military strategy in Kosovo was clearly designed to eliminate the possibility of any US casualties. The perception of US casualty intolerance will enhance Iraqi perception of the utility of its nuclear weapon, which cannot reach the US but which could certainly kill and maim thousands of US military and civilian personnel in the region.
- The Iraqi regime sees Saddam’s other crucial mistake as one of excess. Again, the Sensing, Thinking Iraqis are focused on the idea that there must be a clear, quantifiable threshold of violence that will trigger a US response. They do not understand the United States’ ever-shifting hierarchy of values that override any concrete cost/benefit trade-offs that might be involved. Had he not launched an atrocity-ridden total invasion of Kuwait, the US could not have rallied either a

domestic or an international consensus for intervention. Pulling those babies out of their incubators was a huge miscalculation, and the new Iraqi regime will take care to ensure such excesses do not occur this time around. Iraq may conclude that its limited aims in this crisis afford it a degree of safety. The Iraqis may also believe that in reducing the scope of their objectives, they can fly in under the US deterrent – which is geared toward preventing a major Iraqi invasion – and hence not trigger US Ultimate Concerns.

- The Iranians observed the devastating effects of Iraq's chemical attacks on Iranian-occupied Kurdistan in 1988 and most analysts, inside and outside of Iraq, believe that Iraqi threats to launch similar attacks against Iranian border towns contributed to the Ayatollah Khomeini's decision to accept a negotiated cease-fire later in that year. That Iraq did not come under international sanction for its employment of WMDs in this case may have further legitimized them as very effective operational tools in Iraqi strategic thinking. The Sensing Iraqis believe that their experience (both the Iranian "surrender" and the lack of any severe international repercussions) proves the potential operational utility of weapons of mass destruction.
- The Introverted Iraqi regime seriously believes that Iraq won the 1991 War, and Saddam Hussein remains a national hero. The US inflicted grave damage on Iraq with its planes and tanks; but in the end it failed, after over a decade of sanctions and periodic bombing attacks, to bring Iraq to its knees. Saddam outlasted two US presidents and died quietly in his bed, and if not exactly beloved of his people he was at least respected by them. The Americans and their allies in the Middle East and Europe have learned just how resilient the Iraqi people can be against outside aggression. The Iraqi regime likely doubts whether the US will have the stomach to take on what promises to be another protracted campaign against Iraq; and even if it does, it is not at all certain that its allies will come along. This perception will almost certainly be reinforced by the inevitable political debate in the US, which the Iraqi leadership (and perhaps even the populace) will be watching on CNN: protestors in front of the White House waving "no blood for oil" signs, Senators and Congressmen warning of the political fallout when the "body bags come home," all of which will be intensified geometrically by the possibility of nuclear weapons being used against US troops.
- Kuwait, an Introverted, Sensing, Feeling state, is a tiny state that is fully aware of its vulnerabilities and its military weakness. It has compromised before to secure its strategic fate in the face of insurmountable threats from larger powers – the British, the Ottoman Empire, the Americans – and it is likely to do so again if the only other choice is to risk national destruction. The new Iraqi regime believes it can facilitate such an outcome by placating the Kuwaitis with its "profit sharing" deal. And if that is not enough, the pragmatic Kuwaitis will certainly understand the devastating consequences of even a "tactical" nuclear explosion in the confines of their tiny territory.
- Saudi Arabia, also an Introverted, Sensing, Thinking state, will be intimidated as it was in 1990, but its political problem is more complex than Kuwait's. The

Saudis have funneled massive amounts of money into modernizing their military capability, and there may be internal resistance to letting the “infidel” American troops back into Saudi Arabia when the Saudi military should be able to do the job. (What did the Saudi Royal Family spend all that money for, otherwise?) The problem becomes even more complex if Iraq refrains from directly threatening the Saudis by avoiding an overt military invasion of Kuwait. The warnings of what might lie around the next corner (i.e. that Iraq might, at some point in the future, threaten a similar move against Saudi oil fields) may not carry the political day in Saudi Arabia. A key uncertainty may be whether the House of Saud will be willing to risk putting their religious and political legitimacy on the line again.

- Introverted Iraq does not see itself as the aggressor; it is defending its Ultimate Concerns against a hostile international system by taking control of resources that it believes are rightfully its own. It also knows that other (Introverted) states in the region (and out) may sympathize with that view – Arab support of the 1991 coalition against Iraq was not unanimous, and at least some leaders (most notably Saddam’s bitter rival Hafez al-Asad in Syria) signed on for personal reasons without much popular support.
- Iraq will define the crisis in regional, even local terms, and will not concede the legitimacy of the Extroverted US’s “global” Ultimate Concerns in the crisis even if it recognizes them. The crisis may also mobilize broader “Introverted” opposition to US “intervention” on the Kosovo model. Iraq is likely to have defenders in this point of view, including China and possibly Russia – UN Security Council Members who could (and almost certainly would) block any “international” sanction for a US military action.

C. DETERRING IRAQ

The US has one huge advantage in deterring Iraq: it has an established record of carrying through its threats against Iraq, and the Iraqis are unlikely to doubt that it will do so in this case provided a clear and unambiguous warning is sent *and received*. In previous confrontations with Sensing states, deterrent threats from the Intuitive United States were too ad hoc and lacked the historical substance and consistency that are most likely to impress Sensing States like Iraq.³⁴ In this sense, the US deterrent has already had an effect on the crisis by forcing the Iraqi regime to limit its objectives to seizing the oil production facilities rather than launching another all-out invasion and annexation of Kuwait. The challenge that remains for US deterrence strategy is to defuse the crisis while deterring the Iraqis from using their nuclear weapon against US forces or their neighbors. For such a deterrent to succeed, three things need to happen:

³⁴ A good example of this Sensing-Intuitive disconnect was the US attempt to deter Japanese aggression in the months leading up to the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. See Ziemke, et. al., *Strategic Personality and the Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence*, pp. 45-69.

1. The US must convince Iraq that it sees its Ultimate Concerns as highly invested in the outcome of the crisis;
2. The US must convince Iraq's nervous neighbors – Kuwait and Saudi Arabia – that our Ultimate Concerns are highly and permanently invested in their security, and
3. The US must reduce the Iraqi perception that the use of their nuclear weapons could have a positive outcome, either by limiting their utility or by raising the *certain* cost of their use to an intolerably high level.

One of the lessons that emerges from the 1990 Kuwait crisis is that while our military strategy was sound and succeeded in forcing Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, the overall US strategy suffered from two serious flaws. First, the 1990 crisis was not a failure of deterrence since the US did not, prior to August 1990, try to deter Iraq. Rather, the messages it sent – whether intentional or not – indicated that the US still saw Iraq as an important counter-balance to Iran's hegemonic and revolutionary ambitions in the region, and was not inclined to commit its force to settle “an inter-Arab border dispute.” Its Thinking orientation led Iraq to conclude that it understood the US strategic calculus, but it failed to recognize that absent the Iranian “threat,” a different set of values might dominate US strategic decision-making. The representatives of the United States who treated with the Iraqi regime early on in the crisis did not clearly relate the nature of the shift in the values that would shape US reactions if, indeed, they understood it themselves. As a result, based on the messages Iraq received, and the way in which its Strategic Personality predisposed it to interpret those messages, the decision to invade Kuwait was a strategically rational (which is not to say a justifiable) one. Second, while the US had a domestic and international consensus behind its strategy to force Iraq out of Kuwait, it had no mandate to carry that strategy to its logical conclusion and actually solve the underlying problems that led to the crisis in the first place. This is in part owing to the fact that the policy of the Intuitive United States was not really based on a thorough assessment of the underlying causes of the crisis; rather, it personalized the crisis and assumed “the problem” was Saddam Hussein and his regime.

1. An Iraqi Strategic Calculus

So, the first step in crafting an effective deterrent in this scenario should be to identify the underlying causes of the cycle of crisis between Iraq and its neighbors – the legitimate and not so legitimate insecurities that flow from Iraq's Ultimate Concerns – to understand Iraq's Strategic Calculus and its assessment of the utility of its nuclear weapons. In this scenario, that Strategic Calculus proceeds from three key issues:

1. A new and insecure Iraqi regime fears internal disintegration of its power base. To hold on to power, it believes it must deal with the economic and social legacies of sanctions, but fears that too great a dependence on outside resources will expose Iraq to a rapid influx of dangerous foreign political ideas and unacceptable constraints on the regime's ability to govern Iraq as it sees fit.

Strategic Objectives:

- Gain access to economic resources
- Rally national unity by tapping into the desire for revenge for a shared national trauma

Utility of Nuclear Weapons:

- As a “stick” to pressure neighboring Gulf Arab states to contribute to Iraq’s economic recovery
- As a rallying point for a unifying sense of national pride
- As a possible tool to vent the popular desire for “vengeance” against the outside world, rather than letting it turn inward against the Iraqi regime.

2. Lingering historical resentments over the “loss” of Kuwait, Warbah, and Bubiyan are exacerbated by the continuing threat of a Kurdish separatist uprising, which could provide an opening for the West or Iran to try to partition Iraq. Continuing strategic cooperation between the US and the Gulf Arab states, combined with improving relations between the US and Iran, now present the additional threat of strategic “encirclement.” Iraq’s conventional military capabilities are so depleted that the regime fears an internal uprising would leave it defenseless against any concerted external military aggression – or vice versa.

Strategic Objectives:

- Prevent a US-GCC-Iran alignment from permanently rendering Iraq’s regional power “peripheral”
- Restore a modicum of balance between threats and military capabilities
- Neutralize threats by co-opting the Shi'a and isolating the Kurds

Utility of Nuclear Weapons:

- As a deterrent against outside aggression by either the US or Iran,
- As a deterrent against Iranian or US provocateurs who might try to capitalize on Kurdish separatism,
- As a force multiplier should Iraq find itself in a military confrontation with the US

3. One point upon which the Iraqi regime and the Iraqi people firmly agree is that Iraq has been unjustly denied its rightful leadership role and position of strategic and economic dominance in the Persian Gulf region. The shared trauma of extended sanctions has left deep scars that have forged a stronger sense of shared national fate and identity than Iraq has ever had before. Part of this sense of shared identity is the strong desire to exact justice from the Arabs for their

treachery in 1990-91, and against the US for its role in perpetuating the sanctions regime.

Strategic Objectives:

- Maintain Iraq's position as a player in the regional balance-of-power until it can rebuild its economic and military capabilities
- Teach the Gulf Arabs a lesson and ensure they will not "betray" Iraq again
- Force the US military presence out of the region
- Establish a new regional balance that operates according to Iraq's rules

Utility of Nuclear Weapons:

- As a deterrent to stare down the US once again; the status of the regime will benefit both inside Iraq and "on the street" in the broader Arab world
- Establish Iraq as a military power to be feared until the time it reconstitutes its conventional military and economic power
- The Iraqi regime once again finds that experience taught it the limits of cooperation; nuclear weapons enable it to seek respect and leadership through force and fear.

2. Forging an Effective Deterrent

In this scenario, effective deterrence must achieve three strategic objectives: ensure that Iraq cannot win or be perceived as winning wealth or status from its nuclear blackmail; avoid enhancing regime legitimacy or creating a new mythic hero on the model of Saddam Hussein; and, most important, force Iraq to relinquish the Burqan oil field without using its nuclear weapons. This will be a "sovereign's war" in the sense that the Introverted, Sensing, Thinking Iraqi regime (unlike the Iranian leadership in the next scenario) will base its decisions not on the degree of suffering it might impose on the Iraqi people (a value-oriented measure) but on what will best serve the concrete interests of the regime (a cost / benefit measure). It is important, however, in forging effective US deterrent strategies to keep in mind that this does not translate into illegitimacy, either of the regime or of its war aims, in the eyes of the Iraqi nation. Iraq's Strategic Personality and historical plot have instilled in most Iraqis the shared conviction that national well-being, security, and stability flow down from the top and that what best enhances the material interests of the regime is, in the long run, best for the people. Legitimacy in Thinking Iraq is not determined by values (as it is in the United States and Iran) but by power and order. Deterrence messages should make it clear that the US holds the Iraqi people responsible for the regime and that if the regime steps out of line – if it uses its nuclear weapons – the whole nation will have to pay the price.

National status and the Iraqi regime's desperate need for economic revitalization are ripe targets for US deterrent strategy. Iraq did not precipitate the crisis in pursuit of national status, but hopes that national status will be a fringe benefit of a successful outcome. In Sensing, Thinking Iraq (and in much of the rest of the Arab world), status is measured not in moral terms but in material ones. Nothing conveys status as quickly as the successful use of force. So a primary US strategic objective must be preventing Iraq from winning any status points as a result of its use of force – particularly its nuclear weapons – in the crisis. The most important step in achieving this first goal is to reinforce Saudi and Kuwaiti resolve so that Iraq is not able to achieve any of its strategic objectives through intimidation. The US needs, in a sense, to “deter” its allies from giving in to Iraq's nuclear blackmail by sending the message that it intends to remain the fulcrum of the regional power balance not only because it can, but *because US Ultimate Concerns require it.*

Regime stability is another promising target. The new Iraqi regime is not illegitimate, but it still lacks Saddam Hussein's strong internal legitimacy. It is not at all certain that the new regime could repeat Saddam's trick of snatching mythic victory from the jaws of devastating military defeat. Thus, an important US objective should be ensuring that the regime cannot use this crisis to earn that legitimacy either by forcing the US out of the region or by holding on to the Burqan oil field. Since internal legitimacy in Iraq is earned largely through staying power and the ability to provide physical security, this regime cannot afford another destructive war that it almost certainly would lose, and even less can it afford another costly siege of international sanctions. Saddam Hussein had consolidated his internal power and legitimacy long before he involved Iraq in either the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War or the 1990-1991 Persian Gulf Crisis. This regime has to carefully navigate the thin line between enough of a crisis to rally internal cohesion and a major war that might undermine public tolerance. The fact that the new regime has already hedged its bets – by launching a limited and “plausibly deniable” operation – may indicate that it is aware of this vulnerability and wants to leave itself an out. Sensing, Thinking Iraq has calculated how much it is willing to risk to see whether the gamble pays off; it probably also knows when to fold.

For Introverted, Sensing Iraq, territorial integrity is the most basic and “legitimate” Ultimate Concern at risk here, and should be held back as the “target of last resort” in achieving the most important US strategic objective – deterring Iraq from using its nuclear weapons. In a non-nuclear crisis, there might be some short-term payoff in forcing the Iraqi regime to divide its attention and limited resources (although even then,

it is likely to turn messy and unmanageable as it did in 1991). But in a nuclear scenario, this approach vastly increases the risk that a desperate Iraq will use its nuclear weapons (perhaps even internally, as it used chemical weapons in 1988) to prevent total internal collapse. In either case, it is risky to play the “divide and conquer” game in Iraq *unless* the US and its allies have the political will, resources, and staying power to carry the strategy through – which would include reconstructing and defending two or three successor states (Kurdistan, the Shi'a state, and a rump Iraq) of questionable economic and political viability.

The Intuitive United States is inclined to hope that if it can knock the house of cards down, some unseen hand will intervene to start a natural and inevitable process of democratic evolution inside Iraq. A liberal, reformist, pro-Western element will emerge from the shadows and mobilize the Iraqi peoples’ long unrealized desire for freedom and build a kindler, gentler Iraq. But the political reality is that unless deterrence fails and Iraq does resort to nuclear attacks on US and allied assets, that kind of self-reform is highly unlikely to arise spontaneously within Iraq, and the international political will to impose such reform from the outside is unlikely to materialize. Iraq’s neighbors – especially Turkey and Iran, with their own Kurdish separatist threats – are unlikely to accept the idea of a partition that might stir up separatist unrest in neighboring states. Without major allied support and strong US political will, such a strategy would ultimately fail, hand Iraq a valuable moral victory (as did the US decision not to back the Shi'a uprising in 1991 and its later failure to prevent a remilitarization of Kurdistan in 1996), and make the US look weak and unreliable – a strategic setback in dealing with a Sensing state like Iraq. Of course, if Iraq uses its nuclear weapons, all bets are off.

To summarize, three key elements could contribute to the overall effectiveness of a US deterrent strategy against Iraq in this scenario:

1. Take steps to prevent Iraq from making political capital from the seizure of the Burqan or the subsequent crisis. There is not much the US can do about how the Iraqi regime portrays the crisis inside Iraq. There may not even be much the US can do about how the crisis plays on the Arab “street.” Thus, it is important to keep the Arab allies (ideally including states like Jordan, that wavered in 1991) on board even if public opinion turns against them. The key may be keeping the crisis low-key and avoiding, if possible, a high profile, massive military response. Iraq wins if the US is forced to withdraw from the region; but it also wins if the Intuitive US over-reacts and launches another massive military operation that fails to defeat Iraq *as Iraq defines defeat*.
2. Contain Iraq strategically by removing its option to expand further. If necessary, carry the conflict back into Iraq. Iraq is a Sensing, Thinking state that is likely to

play out the crisis only as long as it sees some chance of the final payoff exceeding the costs it will have to absorb. Those costs will be calculated in fairly straightforward, material terms, especially military power (ability to defend the regime). The key is to make the price Iraq will pay for nuclear use clear and to offer the regime an out. If Iraq uses restraint and pulls its “insurgents” out of Burqan, the US and its Arab allies will undertake material steps to guarantee Iraq’s security and help improve its economic situation. Whatever the outcome of the crisis, Iraq will never see a dime of profit from those Kuwaiti oil fields. By cooperating, Iraq can avoid a costly war and enhance its security; but by continuing down the nuclear path it will never become a regional hegemon and may well not survive as a nation.

3. Hold territorial integrity out as a target of last resort. Make it clear to Iraq that the US and its allies see two possible permanent solutions to the Iraqi problem. Either Iraq can become a responsible member of a regional security system; or, the US can inflict total defeat on Iraq (by either conventional or nuclear means) and rebuild the country from the ground up, as the allies did Germany and Japan following World War II. The choice is Iraq’s.

3. Deterrence and Long-Term Threat Reduction

Deterring Iraq

Deterring Iraq in this scenario presents a straightforward option for pursuing the most important US strategic objectives: to defuse the crisis, return Burqan to Kuwait, and deter Iraq from using its nuclear weapons. At this stage, deterring Iraq’s use of its nuclear weapons can adopt essentially the same approach as the US used in 1991 – to threaten an overwhelming military response (conventional or nuclear) if Iraq 1) does not turn the Kuwaiti oil facilities back over to the emirate unconditionally, and 2) uses its nuclear weapons against US or allied forces or civilian targets. There are obvious operational and international political risks involved, and effective deterrence will require strong support from regional allies. Still, given the US record of consistently carrying out its threats against Iraq, there is a relatively high probability that the Sensing Iraqis will assess the US deterrent as credible. The fact that Iraq does not occupy all of Kuwait affords some flexibility both in controlling the “temperature” of the crisis and in limiting the political risk for regional allies. Since the Iraqis do not have to be physically pushed out of Kuwait proper, a massive and (for the Saudis) politically problematic ground force build-up might be avoided. There is a good chance that the Iraqi regime would, in this case, exercise the “out” it built into its Kuwait incursion and find a way to withdraw and save some face.

There always remains some chance that Iraq will use its nuclear weapons, if it has them. The risk will be especially high early in the crisis, when the Iraqi regime’s Sensing,

Thinking strategic calculus might lead it to believe that to do so could either break Kuwait / Saudi resolve and lead those states to sever their ties to the US, or cross some threshold of casualty tolerance that will undermine US domestic political support for a military operation that with a nuclear attacks has become substantially more costly for American forces (ala Somalia). The US will have to be prepared to retaliate, if not in kind then with overwhelming conventional force, in the event that Iraq does use its nuclear weapons – even if it does not have allied support. Long-range precision strike can reduce the risk to US forces in the early stages of such a confrontation, but such stand-off options may not do much to encourage largely Sensing regional allies who may perceive in them an attempt by the US to hedge its bets and retain the option to “cut and run” if things get politically or militarily messy. For this reason, the US may have to keep its forces on the ground in Kuwait and increase its naval presence in the Persian Gulf to stiffen allied resolve. The message to Iraq and US allies alike must be that while, in a few cases in the past, inflicting a few high-profile casualties undermined US public support for ill-conceived and poorly executed operations, in this case – where both objectives and commitment are clear and well-defined – inflicting heavy US casualties will deepen US resolve. Iraq does not want to be on the receiving end of the US wrath that would result.

Should deterrence fail, Iraq must be totally defeated and the regime made to recognize that defeat. Otherwise, the cycle of crisis will just start over again and the “Iraq problem” will not be solved. This means the US will have to be prepared to commit (and probably to get the UN or regional partners to commit) to some sort of occupation and “nation-building” in Iraq in the aftermath of the war, not unlike the occupation and reintegration of Germany and Japan after World War II. Such an approach would have to rebuild the Iraqi state from the ground up, taking care to mitigate its Ultimate Concerns by establishing an effective, legitimate, and *sustainable* government structure (meaning one in which consistency with Iraq’s Strategic Personality and Ultimate Concerns takes precedence over consistency with US values) and ensuring Iraq’s territorial integrity and status by integrating it fully into the regional security system. The Extroverted, Intuitive US is very good at envisioning just where it wants things to end up – more democratic, more pro-Western, and hence less aggressive Iraqi regime – but it also need to think through the concrete requirements of achieving that goal before undertaking such a project. Such an approach would mean a substantial long-term commitment of military and economic resources and could not succeed without widespread international support, which may not be forthcoming absent an Iraqi nuclear attack.

Even if nuclear deterrence is effective in this scenario, the crisis is not over. Inducing Iraq to withdraw from Burqan will still be challenging. There are two options for US strategy here: to escalate the crisis to a shooting war and force them out (while hoping that nuclear deterrence continues to hold), or to keep the crisis relatively low key and pursue primarily political / diplomatic rather than primarily military solutions. The first option promises a huge political payoff for the Iraqi regime: as long as Iraq does not “go nuclear,” it can hunker down, take its hits, and – like Saddam – emerge from the ashes of American wrath as heroes of the downtrodden Arabs. Moreover, even if the US deterrence and compellence strategies work and the Iraqi regime withdraws from Kuwaiti territory without using its nuclear capability, the underlying causes of the crisis remain unresolved and Iraq is likely to remain a threat to regional stability. All that has been accomplished is to set the clock back to the beginning of the cycle of crisis. The second option poses a number of tough political choices and shifts the burden to extended deterrence and long-term threat reduction.

Threat Reduction

The fundamental weakness of the outcome of the 1991 Persian Gulf War was that it imposed a punitive settlement on Iraq that not only did nothing to mitigate the threats to its Ultimate Concerns that were the underlying cause of the crisis, but actually intensified them. In order for US deterrence strategy to bring long-term stability, the US and its allies need to undertake a regional threat reduction strategy that marks a significant departure from previous practice, even if deterrence works. In that event, threat reduction will involve taking steps to accomplish at least some of what a total defeat / occupation would do if deterrence failed. Essentially, successful threat reduction depends upon mitigating Iraq’s Ultimate Concerns in a way that 1) threatens regime stability if the Iraqis don’t cooperate, 2) promises to safeguard Iraq’s territorial integrity if they do cooperate, and 3) holds out the possibility of gaining national status through cooperation and forecloses any possibility of doing so through confrontation. Such regional threat reduction will prove politically more challenging than would a purely military approach because any steps to mitigate Iraq’s Ultimate Concerns risk the appearance of appeasement.

In order to work, regional threat reduction approaches will have to make clear to Iraq which of its strategic goals are achievable – gaining access to resources to rebuild the economy; regime stability and legitimacy; strategic security; and a reasonable capability for self-defense – and which are not – annexing parts of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, or Iran; revenge for “Arab treachery; and forcing the US out of the region and achieving

regional hegemony. More important, successful threat reduction will require cooperation and commitment from all the United States' regional allies (and preferably all the states of the region, including Iran), its European allies (who are more likely to cooperate with such an approach than with the military option), and important international institutions including the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and major humanitarian NGOs.

How can a threat reduction strategy respond to Iraq's legitimate Ultimate Concerns without crossing the line into appeasement? The key is to see that Iraq achieves its strategic objectives gradually and on a strict *quid pro quo* basis – positive actions on Iraq's part are rewarded, and signs of backsliding are punished. The Extroverted, Feeling US may have to resist the temptation to interfere in the internal political affairs of Iraq provided it behaves within the constraints of international norms – e.g., it does not commit genocide, or use chemical or biological weapons against rebellious populations. Iraq can gain gradual access to international loans and technical assistance by meeting a schedule of milestones – perhaps beginning with a nuclear “buy-out” similar to the one envisioned for North Korea. Such an approach can only work, however, if the milestones are clearly defined and honored. Because of the history of ill-will between the US and Iraq, such a *quid pro quo* will prove most effective if the decisions concerning what the milestones should be and when Iraq is judged to have met them lie outside solely US control. Over time, Iraq might also be allowed to undertake reasonable conventional force modernization in line with its legitimate internal and external security concerns. But this can only happen in Iraq if it is fully integrated into some regional security structure that takes into consideration the Strategic Personalities and Ultimate Concerns of all the states in the Persian Gulf region, including the subject of the next scenario: Iran.

III. DETERRING IRAN

A. IRAN'S STRATEGIC PERSONALITY

1. Iran's Nationalist Myth: The Persian Empire

Iran's historical plot has been entwined with Iraq's since its beginning, just as the Golden Age of Mesopotamia was coming to a close. Persia traces its national origins back to Cyrus the Great (550-529 BCE), founder of the Persian Achaemenid Dynasty, whose armies defeated Persia, Media, Chaldea (southern Mesopotamia), and Egypt to forge a confederation of kingships over which Cyrus reigned as the "Shah of Shahs." At its zenith under Darius the Great (522-486 BCE), Persia's domain encompassed the three great alluvial plains of the known world – Mesopotamia, the Indus valley, and the Nile valley; reached from Greece to India; and constituted history's first great "superpower." Cyrus "liberated" local religions and peoples whom the Assyrians and Babylonians had repressed, including the Israelites, whom he allowed to return to Judea after the sixty-year "Babylonian Captivity" imposed by Nebuchadrezzar; but his successors were less generous and less able, triggering a series of rebellions in Mesopotamia that ended in 482 BCE. From that point on, Mesopotamia became increasingly "Persianized:" the ancient Sumerian gods gave way to Iranian deities, and the ancient languages were replaced with Aramaic, the *lingua franca* of the Persian Empire. Cyrus and Darius carried out the traditional responsibilities for keeping Mesopotamia's canals silt-free and its dykes in good repair; but the later Achaemenids had more grandiose ambitions, and when Xerxes (r. 486-465 BCE) and his successors launched their long and costly series of wars against Greece, Mesopotamia fell into disrepair and neglect.³⁵

The city of Persepolis was the administrative and religious center of the Persian Empire and the site of Darius' palace. In contrast to Babylon, where the monumental art immortalized the achievements of individual kings like Hammurapi and Nebuchadrezzar, the art and architecture of Persepolis focused not on the personality of individual Shahs but on the nature of the relationship between a just king, his god, and his subjects.³⁶ The most important ancient Persian holiday was the festival of *Now Ruz* – a combination of New Years', the celebration of the spring equinox, and Independence Day. In ancient

³⁵ Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, pp. 406-412.

³⁶ McNeill, *The Rise of the West*, p. 150.

times, representatives of all the subject peoples of the Persian Empire traveled to Persepolis to reaffirm and celebrate their shared Persian identity and pay homage to the Shah, who guaranteed their material and spiritual well-being. Alexander the Great invaded Persia in 330 BCE and burned Persepolis to the ground in an effort to destroy the Persian identity and prepare the ground for the seeds of Greek politics and civilization; but while his Seleucid empire exercised political dominance over Persia for the next century, in the words of journalist Sandra Mackey, “they never seduced the Persian heart that dwelled in the blackened ruins of Persepolis.”³⁷

The expectation of just and charismatic leadership established under the Achaemenids has remained a key theme in Iran’s historical plot. The standard by which Iranian rulers have been, and continue to be, judged is embodied in the concept of the *farr*: the divine favor that confers on a Shah his legitimacy. Persia’s great national epic, Ferdowsi’s *Shahnemeh*, was written in the mid-10th century CE, several centuries after the Islamization of Persia, and represents one of the earliest efforts to celebrate the nationalist history and mythology of ancient Persia in the context of Islam. The *Shahnemeh* tells the story of the mythical king Jamshid (loosely based on the historical Achaemenid Shahs) who established a great and righteous kingdom in Iran. “I am,” Jamshid proclaims as the epic opens, “endowed with the divine *Farr* and am at the same time king and priest. I shall stay the hand of evil-doers from evil; and I shall guide the soul toward light.”³⁸ Jamshid ruled for seven hundred years, but over time his pride and thirst for power overshadowed his virtue and he forgot to whom he owed his greatness. “I recognize no lord but myself,” he told his noblemen,

It was through me that skills appeared on earth, and no throne however famed has ever beheld a monarch like me. It is I who adorned the world with beauty and it is by my will that the earth has become what it now is. . . . It is because of me that you have minds and souls in your bodies. And now that you are aware that all this was accomplished by me, it is your duty to entitle me Creator of the world.³⁹

With those words, Jamshid lost the *farr*. His subjects turned against him and proclaimed a new king who hunted down Jamshid and murdered him. For the next thousand years, the ways of righteousness disappeared and the wishes of Satan prevailed,

³⁷ Sandra Mackey, *The Iranians: Persia, Islam, and the Soul of a Nation* (New York: Plume, 1996, 1998), p. 32.

³⁸ Ferdowsi, *The Epic of the Kings: Shah-Nama, the National Epic of Persia*, trans. by Reuben Levy (London and Tehran: Routledge & Keegan Paul and the Royal Institute of Publication of Tehran, 1967), p. 9.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 10-11.

“virtue was humiliated and wizardry esteemed. . . truth hid itself and evil flourished openly.” Deliverance came with the birth of a new righteous king, Faridun, who “grew as a slender cypress, and the royal *Farr* radiated from him.” Faridun’s mother hid him from an evil and jealous king until he was old enough to challenge the reign of wickedness and restore righteous kingship to Iran.⁴⁰ In the parable of Jamshid and Faridun, the *Shahnemeh* exemplifies the Iranian standard for charismatic leadership – honor, valor, wisdom, patriotism, and reverence for Allah together constitute the signs of the *farr*. These mythic kings also embody the set of virtues that Iranians to this day hold as central to their culture and national identity: heroism, glory, justice, tragedy, and defeat.

Throughout Iran’s historical plot, legitimacy has been directly tied to the expectation of spirituality and virtue and thus constitutes more a mystical than a legalistic or structural tie between the ruler and his subjects. If the king turns from the forces of light to the forces of darkness, he loses the *farr* and with it, his legitimacy. Iranian leaders retain the *farr* only insofar as they serve the communal goal of spiritual liberation and establishment of a just and righteous society. Implicit in this concept of charismatic kingship is the right of the people to rise up in rebellion against a king that has lost the *farr*. Persian Shahs too often outlived their *farr* and ended their reigns in lamentable and shameful ways. Few died surrounded by love, or even died of natural causes; and their people did not mourn them. Despite the historical reality that just kingship has been a rarity in Iran, the expectation remains strong in its national myth and the quest for the *farr* has shaped Iran’s Intuitive orientation.

Zoroastrianism

The rise of the Persian Empire coincided with the emergence of a new religion on the Iranian plateau during the sixth century BCE. Prior to this time, the Persians probably observed Vedic cults related to those that gave rise to Hinduism in India. But as Persian civilization transformed from a pastoral and nomadic tribal culture to a settled, agrarian one, the warrior ethos of the Aryans became obsolete and Persia was ripe for a religious transformation. The prophet Zarathustra, who probably lived sometime during the mid-sixth century BCE, promoted an ethic of peace and social harmony; but he was also a fiery charismatic who recounted stories of a great cosmic battle between good and evil in the universe. The Zoroastrian scriptures, the *Avesta*, were not standardized until the forth or fifth century CE and assimilated aspects of local cults, Buddhism, and early Christian doctrine, but the liturgical verses called the *Gathas* are believed to have been written by

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 15-17.

Zarathustra and contain the fundamental, unadulterated elements of Zoroastrian monotheism, mysticism, and messianism. Zarathustra's message was universal, but the faith they inspired never spread far outside Iran.⁴¹ Still, his cosmology – rooted in the belief in a single supreme God of all mankind – had a profound effect on the evolution of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

The Zoroastrian story of creation centers on the celestial dual between *Ahura Mazda* (the Supreme God of Light) and *Angra-Mainyu* (the Lord of Darkness) that will culminate in a final battle, a judgment day, at which the dead will be resurrected and the wicked banished to eternal suffering. From that day of reckoning, *Ahura Mazda* will preside over a purified universe and deliver the faithful into an eternal age of justice and prosperity on earth in the land of Persia.⁴² Zarathustra was not a law-giver. His was an ethics-based faith that emphasized the importance of individual conduct in maintaining the balance of spiritual light and darkness in the world. This Zoroastrian cosmology left deep impressions on the Persian / Iranian world view and still shapes Iran's Introverted, Intuitive, and Feeling orientations: the scale of wickedness in the outside world is alarming and safety from the forces of darkness depends on hewing to one's community. Zoroastrianism also reinforced and centralized the power of the Persian emperors, who received their *farr* from *Ahura Mazda* and were obliged to lead the righteous in the struggle against the forces of evil and darkness and rule the faithful in justice and peace. In Zoroastrianism, Persia gave the world the first religion to replace idolatry and ritual sacrifice with a system of values received from a single God and to build a society around philosophies of ethics, tolerance, and justice.

2. Iran's Islamic Identity: Shi'ism and Islamic Revolution

After the Achaemenid Empire lost the *farr* and fell to the armies of Alexander the Great, Persia came under the control of the Greek Seleucid Empire, the first of a series of foreign occupiers. The Central Asian Parthian Empire pushed the Greeks out of Persia in 163 BCE, resurrected the Achaemenid / Zoroastrian national myth, and established their legitimacy by claiming divine sanction from *Ahura Mazda*. The most important Parthian legacy, however, was their success in defending Persia against the political and cultural onslaught of the Roman Empire – a legacy that ensured Persian distinctiveness and its

⁴¹ The modern Parsi minority in India is descended from Zoroastrian Iranians who fled persecution under the Safavid dynasty of the Persian Empire. There are currently about a half a million Parsis in India as well as a tiny surviving Zoroastrian minority in Iran.

⁴² *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. "Zoroastrianism."

unique quality of being “neither East nor West” in the wake of the juggernaut of Western civilization.

The Parthians fell in 208 CE to an indigenous Iranian dynasty, the Sassanians, who claimed for themselves the legacy and the *farr* of the Achaemenid Shahs and oversaw a Persian and Zoroastrian cultural renaissance. The Sassanian Emperor Shapur I (241-277 CE) initiated the standardization of the ancient Zoroastrian texts and encouraged the assimilation of elements of other local faith traditions – especially Buddhism and Christianity. His attempts to bring the priesthood under the control of the state triggered the first of the power struggles between the clergy and the king that would become central to Iran’s subsequent historical plot. In the end, however, the Sassanians could not revive a moribund, priest-bound faith that had lost its emotional appeal for the masses; nor could they escape a style of kingship that had, like many before, become more concerned with power than virtue, spirituality, and justice. The stage was set for the arrival of a new, militant, and dynamic faith that spoke to the lowly and the great alike.

Iran’s Islamization took place between 750 and 1258 CE during the Abbasid Caliphate, the Golden Age of Islam. For Persians, however, the Golden Age of Islam was a period of national defeat, occupation, and decline that began when invading Arab tribes defeated the last Sassanian Emperor at the battle of Qadisiya in 637 CE.⁴³ The Arab invasion was followed, seven centuries later, by waves of Mongol invaders that culminated with Tamerlane’s bloody conquest in 1370, ushering in the Mongol, Timurid dynasty. The Mongol invasions remain deeply etched on Iranian remembered history, and Iranians today attribute the beauty of the deep-red Iranian rose to the blood of Tamerlane’s victims that saturated the soil of Iran. The invasions depopulated much of the countryside and, as in Iraq, triggered a re-pastoralization of large parts of Iran.

Deliverance from foreign domination came in the form of the Safavid dynasty that, beginning in the mid-16th century, restored Persian autonomy from Arab and Asian cultures by promoting a unique religious and national identity centered on the Shi'a sect of Islam. The Safavids began as a charismatic religious brotherhood founded by a Sufi mystic of Kurdish descent, Shaykh Safi al-Din (1252-1334). The Safavids taught that a spiritually purified Iran would return to greatness, a message with great appeal to a population worn-down by the chaos of military occupation and the emotional aridity of

⁴³ In Iraq, the 1980-1988 Iran – Iraq War is known as the *Qadisiyyat Saddam*, to invoke the idea that Iraq had ushered in a second period of Arab self-confidence, national strength, and regional cultural dominance and would once again turn back the tide of Persian / Iranian cultural imperialism. See Makiya, *Republic of Fear*, p. 264, 270.

Arab Sunni Islam. As the Safavid movement became radicalized, it embraced the messianic Shi'a doctrine and claimed for their first Shah, Isma'il (1487-1524), spiritual descent from the Imam 'Ali and the Twelfth Imam.⁴⁴ Shi'ism enabled the Persians to be devout Muslims – even morally and spiritually superior Muslims – without being establishment Muslims and risking further Arab cultural and political contamination.

Shi'ism

Two aspects of the Shi'a faith most starkly distinguish it from the Sunni mainstream: the martyrdom of the Imam Husayn and the expectation of a messiah, the *Mahdi*. The myth of Husayn, which has its historical roots in two Arab civil wars, provides a spiritual role model for Shi'a piety. Husayn was the son of the Caliph 'Ali, who had resisted the trend in the Islamic ruling hierarchy toward centralization and imperial expansion. He and his band of followers – the *shi'atu 'Ali* (the party of Ali), or *shi'a* – favored a return to the pure spiritual message of the Prophet and had challenged the 'Umayyads for leadership of the Muslim community. 'Ali had fallen victim to a lone assassin at the end of the first Arab Civil War in 661, paving the way for the rise of the 'Umayyad Caliphate. Imam Husayn, anointed as the sole legitimate heir of the Prophet by the Shi'a, took up his father's spiritual cause. During the second Arab Civil War, Husayn was ambushed and murdered by the forces of the 'Umayyad Caliph Yazid at Kerbala in southern Iraq in 680 CE; his brother Abbas was later martyred at Kufa. The murder of Husayn is the central event in Shi'a history: despite their inferior numbers, the followers of 'Ali and Husayn had sacrificed themselves in opposition to a corrupt caliphate that had crossed over to the forces of darkness. The martyrdom of Husayn has lost little of its emotional power over the ensuing thirteen centuries and remains central to Iranian national myth. The open display of mourning for Husayn is an essential element of Shi'a piety and is observed in three religious rituals: the *Ashura*, during which the Shi'a engage in symbolic self-flagellation; the *tazieh*, an annual passion play recounting the events of Husayn's martyrdom; and the *ziyarah*, the pilgrimage to Kerbala and 'Ali's tomb at Najaf.

The second distinctive element of Shi'ism centers on the Twelfth Imam, the anticipated *Mahdi* (messiah) whose return will usher in the day of reckoning and the beginning of Allah's righteous kingdom on earth. The messianic strain in Iranian Shi'ism echoes Zoroastrianism, with its legend of a messiah who will lead the forces of light and restore righteousness and justice on earth at the Last Judgment. The early Shi'a

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 285.

community recognized the descendants of the Prophet through the Caliph ‘Ali as the only legitimate leaders of the Muslim community, and venerated them as temporal embodiments of Allah’s covenant with the Mohammed.⁴⁵ The eleventh of these Imams died in 874 without leaving an heir, but the Shi’a community refused to accept that Allah would leave them without a spiritual leader. Thus was born the myth of the Twelfth Imam, the secret heir, who (like Moses and Jesus before him) had become the target of a jealous Caliphate. To protect him from physical danger and moral corruption, Allah sent angels to spirit the boy into hiding. For several decades, the Twelfth Imam visited his followers for brief periods, coming out of hiding to give guidance to his earthly representatives. This period of “lesser occultation” ended with his last known visit to the Shi’a faithful in 941, ushering the continuing “greater occultation,” which will end at the day of judgment. During the “greater occultation,” the Shi’a faithful struggle to build a righteous society in the face of trial and temptation. Their reward will be the triumphal return of the Twelfth Imam as the *Mahdi* to preside over the establishment of Allah’s righteous paradise on earth.

The Islamic Revolution

For the two-hundred and fifty years between the fall of the Safavid dynasty and the Iranian Revolution of 1979, a nearly continuous power struggle between the state and the religious establishment drove the historical plot of Iran. With their clerical origins, the Safavids fostered close ties between monarchy and mosque, but the later Safavids lost their *farr*, and the dynasty imploded in 1722. Fifty years of anarchy and warlordism ensued, ending with the rise of the Qajars, whose *farr* and control of Iran were both weak. For the next two centuries, the Shi’a clerical establishment constituted the only competent, centralized authority in Iran, and the clerics gradually asserted more and more independence from the weak Qajar regime. Clergy-crown tensions increased as the later Qajar Shahs tried to modernize and Westernize Iranian society and law, beginning in the late 19th century. When the Qajars allowed Britain and Russia to partition Iran into imperialist economic spheres-of-influence, the rift became insurmountable. The clergy bitterly denounced the Shahs and in the process further solidified their already considerable popular authority.

The Iranian army shared the clergy’s outrage over the “selling” of Iraq – not because it undermined Iran’s piety but because it betrayed the legacy of Persian cultural superiority and independence. In 1925, a military coup ousted the Qajars and gave rise to

⁴⁵ Karen Armstrong, *A History of God* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), pp. 162-163.

the new, Pahlavi dynasty. Reza Pahlavi, a professional soldier, made the modernization and secularization of Iran his first priority upon declaring himself Shah. Reza Shah (r. 1925-1941) instituted a series of reforms to secularize Iran and restrict the power of the Shi'a clerical establishment. He replaced the *Shari'a* (Islamic law) with a secular legal code in 1928, outlawed the veiling of women in 1936, defined the legitimacy of his regime in secular terms, and revived the themes of ancient Persian kingship as the basis for his rule. He modernized the army, government, and economy and fostered a pro-Pahlavi, Westernized Iranian elite. His son, Muhammed Reza Shah (r. 1941-1979) continued the work his father had started. By the 1970s, Iran was a regional military power on a scale unprecedented since the days of the Achaemenid dynasty, from which the Pahlavi's claimed historical, if not genetic, lineage. Over the five decades of Pahlavi rule, resentments seethed at the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of the tiny pro-Pahlavi elite. The Pahlavi Shahs, like so many of their predecessors, lost the *farr* and came to be seen as corrupt and unjust rulers. In the end, Muhammed Reza Shah lost his throne because he fell too far out of step with Iran's dominant vision. He was leading Iran down the dark path; or, as Sandra Mackey put it, he

Wanted different things for the Iranians than they wanted for themselves. In a culture where spirituality exceeds materialism as a value, the Shah had pursued physical development at the expense of religious heritage . . . he gave his people infrastructure and his own vision of modern Iran. But he took from those same people their freedom and their faith.⁴⁶

In the revolutionary movement that ousted the Pahlavis in 1979, secular opposition groups, peasants, and labor and religious leaders coalesced around the figure of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The revolution began as an anti-Western, nationalist, political movement but quickly mutated, after the Shah's flight and Khomeini's return from exile, into a radical Shi'a revolution to establish a righteous Islamic republic. Radical clerics won a bloody struggle with secular nationalist and communist parties for the soul of the revolution. Strictly speaking, the Shi'a do not recognize any government in the absence of the Twelfth Imam as legitimate, and the *mujtahids* (the theologians and legal scholars of Shi'ism) who guide the Islamic Republic do so only as caretakers in the absence of the *Mahdi*. Through their exercise of *ijtihad* (the interpretation of the scriptures and law), the clerical establishment endeavors to keep the faithful on the path to righteousness. The *faqih*, the supreme leader, is the ultimate caretaker and the final authority on the model of the Prophet and the Imams. Although he

⁴⁶ Mackey, *The Iranians*, p. 283.

never made the claim himself, to many Iranian Shi'a, the parallel between Khomeini's "miraculous" return from exile in 1979 to overthrow the Shah and rule Iran as the *faqih* and the mystical reincarnation of the *Mahdi* was too strong to ignore. This "second coming" element of Khomeini's mythic status was strong in the early years of the revolution, although it has faded somewhat since his death.

The Martyrs...

Husayn is the hero of Iran's Islamic myth and his life and martyrdom set the standard for piety, idealism, nobility of character, and aesthetic detachment from worldly concerns for Shi'a the world over. Husayn is also a powerful political role model inside Iran. He died because he refused to compromise righteousness for mere temporal gain, and his martyrdom established an important precedent in the Iranian historical plot: defending justice, righteousness, and the community against corrupting influences from the outside world, no matter what the cost, is the highest moral responsibility for any regime and the measure of its *farr*. Husayn's message to the Iranian people is clear: victory over evil does not come cheap; redemption can come only through suffering. Redemptive suffering is central to the Shi'a concept of *jihad*: over the centuries, the Shi'a faithful quietly maintained their purity through the ritual mourning for Husayn, which reminded them of their righteousness and provided a spiritual bond among Shi'a communities of the past, present, and future.⁴⁷ But modern Islamist national myth has revitalized and radicalized the Husayn myth into a call for political action. Iranian national myth since the 1979 revolution has recast Husayn as a righteous revolutionary hero whose *farr* empowered him to lead his people in the struggle against corruption, tyranny, and oppression, even to the point of sacrificing his life.⁴⁸

Iran's most compelling national heroes are those who emulated Husayn by standing up against corruption and fighting for the integrity of Iranian society. One such hero is Muhammed Mossadegh, the "Lion of God," who led the 1951-53 uprising that nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, ejected British influence from the internal affairs of Iran, and temporarily forced the Shah into exile. The elderly, aristocratic, and highly educated Mossadegh was both a father figure and a charismatic leader defending Iran against foreign corruption. That he ultimately failed made him a martyr to Iranian nationalism: he was too good, his enemies (especially the CIA) too evil, he struggled too

⁴⁷ Mahmoud Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering in Islam: A Study of the Devotional Aspects of 'Ashura' in Twelver Shi'ism* (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1978), p. 142-143.

⁴⁸ Haggay Ram and Galia Sabar-Friedman, "The Political Significance of Myth: The Case of Iran and Kenya in a Comparative Perspective," *Cultural Dynamics*, vol. 8, no. 1 (1996), pp. 55, 59.

hard and destroyed his health, he delivered a message his country (temporarily blinded by materialism) was not ready to hear, and still he refused to compromise with the forces of corruption. The Mossadegh myth was so powerful that upon his death in 1967, following a fifteen-year house arrest – the Shah refused to allow him burial with the other martyrs of the 1951 rebellion, fearing that his tomb would become a shrine to the growing anti-Pahlavi resistance movement.⁴⁹

... And the Great Satans

Every martyr needs his Pontius Pilate. In Iranian national myth, the persecutors are sometimes fellow Muslims who have turned away from the path of righteousness in pursuit of temporal power and glory. The Caliph Yazid, who ordered the murder of Husayn and Abbas, is the archetype of the apostate tormenter. Following in his demonic footsteps are the Pahlavis – who allied themselves with the West and secularized Iran – and Saddam Hussein – whose blasphemous war targeted both Iran’s territorial and its spiritual integrity. However corrupt they might be, however, the “Yazids” – the persecutors – play second fiddle in the Iranian pantheon of evil to the tempters – the Great Satans.

Iran’s messianic myth is decidedly not universalist. The point is not to bring the rest of the world along to partake of paradise; rather, it is to prevent the forces of evil – whether internal or external – from corrupting the Iranian community, separating it from its true self, and imperiling its quest for paradise on earth. To the Iranian Shi’ā, the *jihad* is less a spiritual offensive than a defensive stand against relentless barrages from their enemies, both human and supernatural. In Islam, Satan is not the figure of overpowering evil that he is in Christian myth, but a tempter who is perpetually trapped in the physical world and unable to appreciate the deeper meaning of existence. The Great Satan trivializes life and tries to lure the righteous from the everlasting values of Islam toward a life of superficiality and “secularism.”⁵⁰ In pre-Islamic Persia, the “Satans” that tempted the Iranians from the path of righteousness were invaders from Greece, Arabia, and Central Asia. In contemporary Iranian national myth, the part is played by the West in general, and by the US in particular.

When Iranian religious leaders call the US the Great Satan, they are not engaging in mere political hyperbole. In Islamist Iranian national myth, the West and the US are

⁴⁹ Sattareh Farman Farmaian, *Daughter of Persia: A Woman’s Journey from Her Father’s Harem Through the Islamic Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), p. 197,261.

⁵⁰ Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), p. 301-302.

the fount of all evil. Western notions of political pluralism, democracy, and social equality appear to conservative Iranians to have undermined their traditional social order. The US, with its popular culture of secularism, consumerism, individualism, and loose sexual mores threatens to undermine traditional values by emphasizing worldly over spiritual concerns. But the Western threat to Shi'a Islam is not merely one of exposure to alien values. The US is not condemned because Iranians hate it and find its culture repulsive. It is condemned because for Iranians, America is the beautiful siren who will, unless continually resisted, tempt Iranians from the safe waters of righteousness onto the deadly shoals of materialism, individualism, and hedonism. The Great Satan seeks to manipulate and denigrate Islam; its nature, principles, and values are inherently evil, and its followers are enemies of God and, hence, of Iran.⁵¹

3. Iran's Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling Strategic Personality

Persia, like Egypt, is one of history's oldest nations. But in contrast to Egypt, it is neither ethnically nor culturally homogenous. Only about half the population of Iran is ethnically Persian, and less than two-thirds of Iranians speak Farsi (Persian) as their native tongue. The other half of the population consists of a tapestry of Arabs, Kurds, Baluchis, Turkomens, and other assorted minorities; in many provinces and cities in Iran, travelers will hear Arabic or Turkish spoken in the markets and coffee houses more often than Farsi. Still, Iranians share a deep – even maudlin – sense of national identity and love of their country. What holds Iran together and helps define it as a nation is its shared history – the glory and intellectual traditions of Persia – and its faith. Less than one percent of Iranians are non-Muslims (and include Christians, Zoroastrians, a few thousand Jews, and the bitterly oppressed Ba'his), and while official census figures do not distinguish between sects, it is believed that at least 80 percent of Muslims are Shi'a. Three themes emerge in Iran's historical plot that account both for its unity and strong sense of national identity and its Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling Strategic Personality: Iranian Dualism, shared devotion to Iran as a visionary "work in progress," and the conviction that Iran is the Center of the Universe.

Iranian Dualism

There are deep and persistent tensions in the Iranian national identity. But unlike the forces that seem constantly to threaten to tear Iraq apart, the tensions in Iran are unifying and universally shared. The two streams of Iran's Persian nationalist and Islamic

⁵¹ Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1990.

visionary identities are usually parallel and complementary. And both have shaped Iran's Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling Strategic Personality. But at times, these two strains in Iran's identity conflict. Iran's historical plot has not always played out evenly – sometimes one element or the other becomes too prominent and throws the whole out of balance. Most recently, the Islamic Revolution overcompensated for the Pahlavi regime's repressive Persian nationalism with even more repressive Islamism. But the Persian nationalist strain will not be repressed, a fact reflected in this scene described by Sandra Mackey:

Another chapter of the 1980s is written in the crowded acres of the cemetery where the dead of the eight-year-long Iran-Iraq War lie. Over acres and acres, row after row of graves jam one against the other. At the head of almost all is a small, shallow cabinet constructed of glass held together by aluminum strips. In each, the fading photograph of a young face hangs over a collection of small objects. In some, there is a toy from a childhood cut short by war. In others, there is candy from the wedding of a young soldier. In still others, I saw objects symbolizing Iranians' two identities – a tiny prayer rug representing Islam sprinkled with plastic flowers depicting the Persian new year; miniature dumbbells used in the gymnastics performance that accompanies the reading of the *Shanameh* crossed on top of a Koran.⁵²

Shi'a clerics tried, and failed, to purge the secular nationalist Persian strain from the national character of Islamic Iran. Iran still observes the solar calendar of ancient Persia rather than Islam's lunar year, and Iranians still celebrate the ancient Zoroastrian festival of *Now Ruz* as their most important national holiday – in this case, in fact, Persia trumps Islam. The Ramadan feast is suspended for the two weeks of *Now Ruz* in those years when both holidays fall in the same month.

In recent years, the dictates of secular national interests have gained ground on those of the Islamist vision in post-revolutionary Iran. The first sign came in 1988 when the Ayatollah Khomeini came to the bitter realization that whatever territorial and ideological compromises Iran would have to make to achieve a cease-fire in their war with Iraq would be far preferable to a continuation of the endless, pointless slaughter that increasingly undermined the stability and long-term survival of the Islamic Republic. Iran's commitment to exporting its revolution has also waned – in part because of diminishing returns, but largely because the costs of continuing would be too high in diplomatic terms. Iran seeks to restore ancient Persia's position in Asia by forging better relations with Russia and China (both of which are vulnerable to Islamist separatist

⁵² Mackey, *The Iranians*, pp. 301-302.

movements) and with the emerging Central Asian Republics and building a sort of 21st century “Silk Road.” But to do so, Iran knows it must moderate its image and become a responsible member of the international community.⁵³ Iran even managed to overcome its hatred of the Great Satan and Israel and remained neutral during the 1991 Persian Gulf War – a tacit recognition that, at least in this case, Iran and the US shared a common strategic interest in seeing Iraq contained.

Iran as a “work in progress”

From its earliest history, Persia / Iran has been a nation struggling to become a paradise. What changes is the consensus concerning the values that constitute the righteous path to implement the vision. A key part of the struggle has been to define Iran’s distinctiveness. In modern times, Shi’ism establishes Iran’s character and establishes its boundaries by drawing the distinction between the mystical and poetic Persians and the earth-bound and prosaic Arabs; between the righteous Shi’a and the legalistic Sunnis; and between the Shi’a quest for a mystical bond with Allah and the Sunni drive to obey the rules. To the Shi’a, the Koran is a source of inspiration and insight upon which to base their vision; to the Sunni, it is a blueprint, a guidebook, and the intractable final word on law and faith. Sunni religious scholars seek comprehension (*al-fuqaha*); Shia religious scholars interpret (*ijtihad*). The greatest spiritual leaders in Shi’ism are the theologians and scholars who apply their imagination, creativity, values, and emotions to interpreting and teaching the faith.

The Iranian national vision is a dream, not a blueprint; and the Islamic Revolution is no exception. Journalist Elaine Sciolino has characterized it as “the improvised revolution.” For the Feeling Iranians, in contrast to the Thinking Iraqis, the goal is not a rigid state structure that controls every aspect of life and allows for no accidents, but a society bound by shared values. Even in the often repressive Islamic Republic, as Sciolino writes, rules are of little use and even less value:

The Islamic Republic is a fluid place where the rules are hard to keep straight because they keep changing. What is banned one day might be permitted the next. I’ve heard it said that Iranian political leaders are terrific chess players, always plotting their strategy ten steps ahead. To me they are more like players in a jazz band, changing the rhythm and the tempo and picking up spontaneous cues from

⁵³ Dov Waxman, *The Islamic Republic of Iran: Between Revolution and Realpolitik* (Leamington Spa: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, 1998), p. 8.

each other as they go along. Knowing how to improvise is the only way to get things done – and sometimes even to survive.⁵⁴

Iran, like Iraq, has suffered long period of external domination and internal political repression; but Iran’s visions always held the people together even when the state did not. Iranians don’t fear disorder – disorder is part and parcel of the righteous struggle – but they do fear losing their vision. They even have a word for it – *harj-o-marj*. It means, in a nutshell, the worst thing that can happen to a nation, the condition of a country that collapses into darkness, chaos, and anarchy because it has lost sight of its vision and has no strong, charismatic leadership behind which to unite.⁵⁵ In contrast to Iraq, whose strategic vulnerability and ethnic diversity have prevented the rise of true nationalist identity, Iranians feel an intense nationalism and deep emotional attachment to their country that flows directly from their long, shared history of foreign invasion and humiliation and cultural diversity. That identity – the shared vision of Iran – is what sustains the nation through the hard times. As Mr. Ferdousi, a Persian carpet salesman in Tehran, told a Polish journalist during the chaos following the fall of the Shah,

The nation will survive everything . . . beauty is indestructible. You must remember. . . that what has made it possible for the Persians to remain themselves over two and a half millennia, what has made it possible to remain ourselves in spite of so many wars, invasions, and occupations, is our spiritual, not our material strength – our poetry, and not our technology; our religion and not our factories.⁵⁶

And, he might have added, our vision and not our state.

The Center of the Universe

In its national and religious myth, Iran is and always has been the “Center of the Universe” – the site of *Ahura-Mazda*’s paradise on earth, the homeland of the world’s first “global” superpower, the heart of Allah’s righteous society. But Iran has always been a center under siege: an Aryan people surrounded by Arabs and Asians, Shi’ā in the predominantly Sunni Muslim community, linguistically distinct from both the Arab and Turkic peoples that surround Iran, and philosophically and intellectually separate from the Christian West and the Orthodox East. The traditional self-image of Persia as the center of the universe reflects a cultural arrogance born of its ancient roots, inventive

⁵⁴ Elaine Sciolino, *Persian Mirrors: The Elusive Face of Iran* (New York: Free Press, 2000), pp. 30-31.

⁵⁵ Farmaian, *Daughter of Persia*, pp. 44-45.

⁵⁶ Ryszard Kapuscinski, *Shah of Shahs*, trans. by William R. Brand and Katarzyna Mroczkowska-Brand (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), p. 151.

culture, and abundant natural wealth. But it also reflects a sense of deep cultural grievance – the sense that throughout its long history, Persia / Iran has been plotted against, abused, misunderstood, and prevented from achieving its full potential by a hostile, jealous, but inferior outside world. The lesson of this long history shapes Iran's Introverted orientation – Iran thrives to the extent that it can shield itself and its people from corrupting foreign influences that might tempt it from the righteous path. If the Iranians have not always been the masters of their land, they believe they have always been masters of their soul.

4. Iran's Strategic Outlook

Iran's Strategic Personality and Ultimate Concerns give it a strategic orientation dominated by a constant vigilance against internal and external threats to its national vision. This vigilance has not always translated into isolation or unwillingness to engage with the outside world or to participate in international institutions. The nature of the Islamist regime, however, and its perception that the outside world is hostile to the values that underlie Iran's national vision have led it to maintain firm boundaries between Iran and the international system, particularly the Extroverted West. Iran also has a strong streak of cultural expansionism, however, that has traditionally served a defensive purpose – by shaping the nature of the world around it, whether during the ancient Persian Empire or during the early years of the Iranian Islamic Revolution. Iran has strived to build a cultural and/or religious buffer zone around its vision and values. Iran also recognizes the necessity of integration to ensure the physical well-being of its population – an important measure of a regime's *farr* – but will try to control the nature of that engagement to ensure that dangerous values are not imported along with material goods. As a Feeling state, Iran is guided by a hierarchy of values that, while deeply held, are far from rigid. Throughout its history, Persia / Iran has adjusted the nature and the priorities of its values in response to changes in its internal and external environment. That such shifts are natural and expected does not, however, make them easy. A major factor shaping both Iran's domestic governance and external relations is the constant struggle to ensure that those changes flow organically from Iran's nature and internal calculus rather than being imported or imposed from the outside.

B. THE SCENARIO

1. Historical Background

Shi'ism was born in the plains of southern Iraq, and its holiest sites are all located in Iraqi territory. Collectively known to Shi'a as the '*Atabat* (doorways), the towns of Najaf, Kerbala, al-Kazimiyya, and Sammarra are traditionally associated with the life and martyrdom of Caliph 'Ali and his sons Husayn and Abbas and, as such, have been centers of Shi'a pilgrimage and learning for Persian as well as Arab Shi'a clerics and rulers. Before the Iran-Iraq War closed off access to the holy cities for Iranian Shi'a clerics and forced them to move their spiritual center to Qom in Iran, Najaf was the intellectual and spiritual heart of Shi'a Islam. The Ayatollah Khomeini went into exile there in 1965, teaching, delivering his famous revolutionary sermons, and plotting the Islamic revolution in the holy city until Saddam Hussein had him deported to France at the Shah's request in 1978.

The Persian state always claimed a degree of patrimonial interest in how the Ottoman and, later, Iraqi authorities maintained the Shi'a holy sites and treated the endless stream of Persian pilgrims, clerics, traders, and settlers who gathered in and around the '*atabat*. Nor were the Shi'a regimes in Persia / Iran above using the Arab Shi'a in southern Iraq as a cat's-paw to foment internal insecurity and dissent against the Ottomans, the Hashemites, and the Ba'ath when to do so served Iran's strategic purposes. The Shi'a were always an irascible element in Iraqi politics, and they shared obvious religious and cultural ties to their co-religionists in Iran; but the vast majority of Iraqi Shi'a were also Arabs and even Iraqi nationalists who sought to reverse their exclusion from Iraqi political life, not advance it further by becoming tools of Iranian regimes. Over the decades since the accession of the Arab-nationalist Ba'ath regime, thousands of Iraqi Shi'a, particularly those of Persian ethnic descent, have fled or been expelled to Iran. In Iran, the Iraqi-born Shi'a are, for the most part, viewed with considerable suspicion. This has been especially true since the early years of the Iran-Iraq War, when the Iraqi Shi'a showed their true colors by failing to rise up against the Yazid Hussein and answering the call to defend their national homeland rather than joining forces with their Iranian co-religionists.

Their fundamental Iraqi identity notwithstanding, the Iraqi regime has periodically targeted the Shi'a community for brutal intimidation and repression, especially during periods of tension with Iran. Iraq still suffers a certain identity crisis when it comes to the long inter-mingling of Iraqi and Iranian history and culture. The

Iraqi Shi'a stand as constant reminders of that legacy and are, hence, a source of discomfort and unease among those Iraqi nationalist who want to instill a unique sense of identity in the nation. To deal with that discomfort, Iraqi regimes have, over the years, periodically cracked down on the Shi'a to remind them, and to reassure the regimes themselves, that it is to Iraq rather than Iran that the Shi'a turn for their continued well being and to whom they owe their principal allegiance.

During a crackdown that coincided with the onset of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980, large numbers of Iraqi Shi'a were arrested, key Shi'a political and religious leaders, including Muhammad Baqr al-Sadr, were executed, and tens of thousands of Shi'a of Persian descent were either expelled or fled from the country.⁵⁷ A similar crackdown during a Shi'a uprising in the aftermath of the 1991 Persian Gulf War led to the death under house arrest of one of Shi'ism's most venerated clerics and an established critic of Khomeini's principle of *Velayat-e faqih* (the direct rule of Islamic clerics and jurists), the Grand Ayatollah Abu al-Qasim al-Khoi, and the arrest, torture, and execution of several members of his inner circle.

The Iranians have their own potential “fifth column” in the form of a half-million or so Arab-speaking Iranians in the province of Khuzestan, or as the Iraqis call it, “Arabistan.” Khuzestan had long been a target of Arab nationalist propaganda, with Nasserites in Egypt and Ba’ath in Iraq periodically calling for the “liberation” of the Arabs under Iranian rule. The vast majority of the province has historically been unambiguously Persian / Iranian territory; but the cities of Khoramshar and Abadan, and the strip of territory between the Bamshir River and the Shatt al-Arab, had gone back and forth between Persia and the Ottoman province of Iraq since at least the mid-17th century. The Iraqis rationalize their dubious claim to the province by citing its Arab-speaking population and the 1639 Treaty of Zuhab in which the Safavids in Persia ceded the cities of Khoramshar and Abadan to the Ottoman Sultan Murad IV. From that point on, the territory was “unequivocally Iraqi” and remained so until a weak Ottoman Empire “mistakenly” ceded the territory back to Iran in 1847.⁵⁸ Still, the territory in question constituted only about one percent of the total land area of Khuzestan.

The “liberation” of Khuzestan was one of Iraq’s major war aims in 1980. The Islamic revolution in 1979 had triggered uprisings among Arabs in Khuzestan who feared

⁵⁷ Graham E. Fuller, *The “Center of the Universe”: The Geopolitics of Iran* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p. 39.

⁵⁸ Makiya, *Republic of Fear*, p. 267.

losing their cultural identity in an Iranian Shi'a regime, and Iraq hoped they would join forces with invading Iraqi armies. They didn't. In the decades since the revolution, the Islamic regime in Iran has largely placated the Arabs of Khuzestan and has diluted the risk of uprising by encouraging the resettlement of Persians in the area to even out the demographics.⁵⁹ In the Persian carpet that is Iranian ethnic diversity, the half million Khuzestan Arabs constitute barely a speck of contrast when compared to some six million Kurds or eleven million Azeris. The status of the Arab minority in Khuzestan remains a problem for Iran in that it constitutes a perennial target of Iraqi (and occasionally broader Arab) anti-Iranian nationalist propaganda. For Iraq, the more important factor is treasure rather than blood – Khuzestan is home to Iran's most important oil installations, including a vital complex at Abadan.

The 1988 cease-fire between Iran and Iraq did not resolve the perennial border dispute over the status of the Shatt al-Arab to the satisfaction of either side. The waterway known as the Shatt al-Arab begins at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and has traditionally marked the easternmost reach of the Arab world (hence, “the Arab shore”). For roughly forty miles, it also constitutes the southernmost boundary between Iran and Iraq. Sovereignty over the Shatt has historically been administered according to the international principle of the *thalweg*, by which national boundaries commonly run down the middle of rivers with states on both shores enjoying the right of navigation. The British mandate, however, in a departure from international tradition had established Iraqi control of the whole river, except along a four-mile stretch paralleling the coast of the Iranian port of Abadan. Under this regime, all shipping along the Shatt had to fly the Iraqi flag and pay Iraq navigation fees. In the 1975 Algiers Agreement, Saddam Hussein conceded Iraqi sovereignty over the Shatt and agreed to observe the principle of the *thalweg* in exchange for a promise from the Shah of Iran to cease his support for the Kurdish rebellion in Iraq. Saddam publicly abrogated the Algiers agreement in September 1980, shortly before he invaded Iran and reclaimed the entire Shatt for Iraq. Eight years and millions of casualties later, Iran and Iraq agreed to a cease-fire in their war that restored the *status quo ante bellum*.

All these territorial issues notwithstanding, the conflict between Iran and Iraq in 1980 was not – and never really has been – about territory; it was about who would be the dominant power in the Persian Gulf region. Iran has long held that position, by virtue of historical tradition and its natural geo-strategic advantages if nothing else. But ever

⁵⁹ Fuller, *The “Center of the Universe,”* p. 42.

since its independence, Iraq has advanced itself as the “protector of the Gulf Arabs” and the natural hegemon in the region. The 1988 cease-fire, the 1991 Persian Gulf War, and the subsequent decade of sanctions temporarily removed Iraq from contention with Iran for strategic dominance of the Persian Gulf. Iraq’s long-standing desire to challenge Iran’s aspiration to regional hegemony, however, has not died. Nor has Iran’s anxiety that a revitalized, remilitarized Iraq could once again threaten Iranian security with devastating consequences.

2. The Scenario

As Iranian President Mohammed Khatami approached the end of his second and last term in office in early 2005, the Council of Guardians was determined not to repeat its mistake in 1997 of allowing the reformist Khatami to run against their hand-picked, conservative, and previously popular candidate Ali-Akbar Nateq-Nouri. In President Khatami’s second term, the tensions between reformers in the government and the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and his conservative clerical supporters reached a fever pitch. To the conservatives, Iran was perched on the verge of a *harj-o-marj* as the nation seemed increasingly to be losing sight of its righteous, Islamist vision, and counter-revolutionary sentiment and “Westoxification” was, in the eyes of the clerics, rampant. Student demonstrations had grown louder and more common, and journalists had become increasingly bold in their criticism of the clerics and demands for democratic reform as the post-revolution “baby boomers” (who constituted some 65 percent of the population) came of age, embraced Western cultural icons, and expressed dissatisfaction with the slow pace of economic and social reform, and membership in the traditional revolutionary patriotic organizations like the *baseej* volunteer corps that provided much of the cannon fodder during the Iran-Iraq War dwindled to a trickle. The conservative clerics were alarmed and determined to stuff the genie of social and political change back into his bottle by whatever means necessary.

In the run-up to the national elections that would choose Iran’s next government, the Council of Guardians decided to take a drastic step. With the blessing of Supreme Leader Khamenei, they arrested or disqualified virtually the entire slate of reformist candidates on Islamic grounds, including several sitting reformist members of Parliament (the *Majles*) and the favored reformist candidate for President, and closed all the pro-reform newspapers. In so doing, the Guardians effectively rigged the elections and ensured the restoration of a conservative and Islamically-correct government. The clerical hardliners had taken limited steps already to discredit the reformist factions, such as the

1998 trial of Gholan-Hosein Karbaschi, the popular reformist mayor of Tehran and a close political ally of President Khatami. Karbaschi was convicted of corruption in a trial that was televised nationwide over several weeks, but it was the Iranian judicial system, in the end, that was convicted of corruption in the court of public opinion. A year later, a special clerical tribunal convicted Abdollah Nouri – a theologian favored to become the Speaker of the Majles in 2000 – of treason. But again, the defendant managed to cast long shadows on the religious and legal legitimacy of the clerical regime.

What the Council of Guardians failed to take into consideration in deciding to launch their “clerical coup” was that these trials and others had electrified the Iranian electorate and left them more determined than ever to see change. During the eight years since Khatami first took office in 1987, Iranians made hard-won advances in their personal freedom and their voice in how the national vision should be implemented – freedoms they would not easily surrender. The result of the Council’s actions was not, as it had hoped, a quiet restoration of Islamic values but a massive electoral boycott, record low voter turnout, and widespread protests against what most Iranians dismissed as fraudulent elections. In 1997, 75 percent of the 30 million Iranians who voted in the Presidential election voted for Khatami; this time, almost as many stayed at home and boycotted the elections. Only the traditional supporters of the hardliners, such as the *bazaaris*, turned out to vote, resulting in the election of Iran’s first hard-line government in over a decade – a government with no mandate and no legitimacy.

The Iranian masses, much more politically sophisticated than the Council of Guardians realized and much emboldened by a decade of slow but fairly steady reform, are not about to accept the electoral sleight-of-hand without a fight. Iranians take to the streets in Tehran and other major cities, and increasingly violent civil unrest spreads across Iran. Tens of thousands of Iranians, first students but as time goes on a broader and broader cross section of Iranian society, take to the streets in Iran’s major cities to demand new, fair, and legal elections. The government responds by declaring martial law and resurrecting the revolutionary “terror.” Universities are closed, leading dissenters are arrested – some just disappear, others are imprisoned, and still others receive long prison sentences or are executed after public “show trials” before clerical kangaroo courts and “confessions” extorted under torture. The brutality of the regime’s response stirs even more unrest throughout Iran. In the province of Khuzestan, Arabs and Persians alike mount demonstrations in defense of the reformers that turn increasingly unruly.

Over in Iraq, Saddam Hussein is having his own problems. The UN sanctions regime has gradually disintegrated over the years, but Iraq has found economic recovery

slow going. Even with his vaunted system of internal control more-or-less intact, Saddam knows that it is only a matter of time before unrest begins to spread. During the long years of sanctions, government rationing and the struggle just to stay alive kept the Iraqi masses, even the perennially restive Shi'a, acquiescent. Now things were getting better; not a lot better, but enough better that the Iraqi population was beginning to expect more and faster improvement. Saddam is particularly concerned about the Shi'a, whom he has never fully trusted since Shi'a leaders courted CIA support for their uprising against his regime in the weeks following the end of the 1991 US war of aggression. The one political gambit that has always succeeded in rallying public opinion in Iraq – even among the Shi'a – around the Ba'ath regime is stirring up an Arab-nationalist crisis with Iran. The spreading unrest there and the apparent resurgence of official Iranian revolutionary zeal gives Saddam an idea that might enable him to kill two birds with one stone.

The Crisis

As a sort of insurance measure, Saddam decides he needs to send a “warning shot” over the bow of the Shi'a leadership in Iraq to ensure continued stability and government control among the Arabs around Basra. He does so by arresting a number of important Shi'a clerics on charges of collaborating with Iran and the CIA to foment unrest in southern Iraq and “retaliating” by initiating support for the Arabs currently engaged in unrest in Khuzestan. The unrest in Khuzestan has nothing to do with Arab separatism, and even the separatist Arabs there have never displayed any particular desire to be “liberated” by Iraq. Saddam works around these problems by planting Iraqi “provocateurs” in the cities along the frontier in the hopes that they can re-channel provincial political frustration into a “home-grown” Arab insurgency against the Islamic Republic. If Iraq’s actions are discovered, Saddam can justify them by claiming he is doing nothing more than retaliating for the Islamic regime’s attempts to foment rebellion among Iraq’s Shi'a. But Saddam is betting that since the international community has never rushed to the Islamic Republic’s defense before, and they will be unlikely to do so now.

Saddam’s regime needs a small crisis with Iran to rally internal patriotism, but it cannot risk a big one. The Iraqi military has not yet recovered from the devastating effects of the 1991 war and the long period of sanctions. The Iraqis assume, however, that the Iranian regime is too preoccupied with its internal troubles and too intimidated by the traumatic memories of the 1980-1988 war to launch an all-out military response to Iraqi provocation. Taking a page from Pakistan’s playbook, the Iraqis hope they can boost

internal political cohesion and buy support on “the street” throughout the Arab world by providing material and moral support for the “indigenous *jihad* against the blasphemous Iranian regime and its illegal occupation of Arabistan,” while maintaining plausible deniability of its more direct, inflammatory role in fomenting the crisis.

But the Iraqi regime has badly miscalculated on at least three counts. First, by presenting an external threat to Iranian sovereignty that might just distract public attention away from the fact that the Council of Guardians stole Iran’s nascent democracy, the Iraqis have played right into the conservative clerics’ hands. Far from being distracted from the “Arabistan *jihad*” the new Iranian government hopes popular support will be galvanized by it. Second, Iran has a clear strategic advantage over Iraq in this crisis, even if it cannot afford a massive ground war ala 1980-1988, and even if it cannot count on international support. The first step the Iranian regime takes is to institute a total blockade of shipping along the Shatt al-Arab, which it can enforce from the shore without launching any naval forces at all. Just to be on the safe side, the Iranian hardliners decide to ensure that Iraq cannot run the blockade by sailing tankers under the Kuwaiti flag – with or without Kuwaiti cooperation. They thus take the additional step of harassing Kuwaiti shipping in and out of the Gulf, first by forced boarding and inspections and later by random missile attacks against Kuwaiti shipping in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran can withstand the economic effects of the blockade much longer than can Iraq since its inland pipelines are adequate to get enough oil from Abadan and elsewhere in Khuzestan to market. Finally, Iran officially reveals that it has nuclear-armed, intermediate-range ballistic missiles that the regime believes will ensure that the US cannot save Iraq’s hide again by breaking the Iranian blockade. US intelligence has known for some time that Iran had purchased nuclear-capable delivery systems from North Korea, and while the Russian government still officially denies it, there are signs that Iran may also have acquired suitable warheads from Russian sources. Evidence that Iran has successfully married warheads and missiles is inconclusive, but Iran’s threat is technically credible and must be taken seriously. Iraq, long hobbled by sanctions, has not yet acquired its own nuclear capability. The Iranians issue a warning that they reserve the right to use their nuclear weapons against any forces that interfere with the blockade or that attempt to reinforce any naval presence in the region deemed to be engaged in hostile activity Iran.

3. The Balance of Ultimate Concerns and Strategic Personalities

Iran's Ultimate Concerns: Who Controls the Vision?

The current internal turmoil in Iran is a symptom of something much deeper and potentially more dangerous than a mere internal struggle for political power. But at the same time, the crisis appears less threatening to Iranian national life when viewed from the perspective of Iran's historical plot and Strategic Personality. Most Iranians are not alarmed by the occasional break-down of order and stability – in fact, they regard a certain degree of chaos as a normal and necessary step in the evolution of their social ideal. What they care very deeply about is that there be meaning and purpose in their national life. As the Imam Khomeini once put it,

Could anyone wish his child to be martyred in order to obtain a good house? This is not an issue. The issue is another world. Martyrdom is meant for another world. This is the martyrdom sought by all God's saints and prophets . . . the people want this meaning.⁶⁰

The rigid Islamist social and political order has lost its meaning for the vast majority of Iranians, and the critics of the conservative clerics believe they have lost their legitimacy as responsible stewards of the national vision. The political turmoil is a sign that Iranians are struggling to redefine and reshape their Islamist national vision. They are engaged in a debate – sometimes with words, sometimes with stones and bullets – over the *meaning* of Iran's Islamic vision and under whose leadership it should be implemented.

President Khatami, the other reformist clerics and politicians, and the vast majority of the Iranian electorate are not seeking to reverse the Islamic revolution but to free it to continue to move forward. The consensus for an Iranian national vision rooted in Shi'a Islamic values is strong and durable. What the reformers want is to restore a more sustainable balance between Iran's Islamic values and its identity as a normal, national state that must deal with prosaic concerns like economic growth, technical modernization, education, jobs, and basic personal freedom as well as with the state of the Iranians' everlasting souls. Their quest, however, has come down to a fundamental power struggle between the power of the duly elected representatives of the Iranian people and the mystical, divinely inspired authority of the Supreme Leader and the Council of Guardians.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, p. 324.

In Persian / Iranian political tradition, legitimacy – the *farr* – is granted by God, but it is embodied in the people. When the king is righteous in his people’s eyes, his reign is secure. But the hardliners have forgotten that the *farr* flows from the people; power has become more important to them than legitimacy. The Supreme Leader, the Council of Guardians, and the other conservative elements in the Iranian political milieu have, like most aging revolutionaries, too much invested in the Islamic revolution – emotionally as well as economically and politically – to risk losing control of it. But when the Council of Guardians took the desperate step of stealing the national elections, they lost the *farr*. Like Caliphs and Shahs before them, they had abandoned their trust in the people to follow the righteous path and made a bald move to seize temporal power and control. They became corrupt in the eyes of the vast majority of the Iranian people. Now they need to find a way to regain the *farr*. Stirring up an unholy external threat is a time-tested method of rallying support behind a faltering regime. The conservative government needs a moral victory to restore its legitimacy; but it needs a crisis that will not embroil Iran in another long, bloody, and devastating war. Saddam hands them just such a threat on a silver platter.

Saddam’s aggression in Khuzestan looks, to the hardliners, like a gift from Allah. Like the 1979 “student” seizure and occupation of the US embassy in Tehran, this is not a crisis of the regime’s making, but it is one that serves the hardliners’ purposes nicely. The hostage crisis in 1979-1980 focused national attention on the Great Satan and united the Iranian people behind Imam Khomeini at a critical period of internal turbulence between secular nationalist and Islamist revolutionary factions following the overthrow of the Shah. By neutralizing the most adamant nationalist opponents of the Islamic revolution, the crisis paved the way for the approval of the draft Constitution that established Iran as an Islamic Republic and allowed Islamists to carry the day in Presidential and Parliamentary elections without any serious political challenges.⁶¹ The hardliners hope this crisis can play the same role. They have every interest in seeing the crisis escalate in order that national anger will be diverted from them toward “Yazid” Hussein who, once again, seeks to destroy the Islamic Republic.

What the hard-line government must do, however, is manage the crisis in such a way that it stays limited – they know that the Iranian people will not send their sons off to become martyrs in another protracted war. The regime is not seriously concerned about the status of Khuzestan. The Arabs there have, from time to time, risen up to assert their

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 324.

cultural identity within the Islamic Republic, but the regime has always been able to placate them. And in recent years, the regime has managed to dilute the effect of any Arab separatist tendencies by encouraging the relocation of Persian Iranians into the area, most of which is no longer majority Arab. At any rate, the Khuzestan Arabs have never – even during the Iran-Iraq War when Iraqi forces occupied parts of the region along the Shatt – shown any desire to be “liberated” by Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. Who would? Moreover, even if the worst happened and Iraq did manage to annex parts of Khuzestan, the loss would not do any measurable damage to Iranian national unity. If anything, the shared trauma might strengthen it. But the regime is also confident that it can prevail in this crisis, provided it can keep the US from once again intervening on Iraq’s behalf.⁶² The regime might also succeed in turning the crisis to their advantage in another respect, by using it as an excuse to force the US out of the Persian Gulf region all together, at least long enough for the hard-line regime to consolidate its internal control and restore its *farr*.

Iran’s Ultimate Concerns: Defending Islamic Values

For the conservative clerical establishment, the internal crisis in Iran is about defending the Islamic values that constitute the bedrock of the national vision. For the reformers, the real issue is Iran’s desperate need to allow its Islamic values and vision to adjust to changes as the Republic matures and to set aside some of the stifling anti-modern, xenophobic values that may have been necessary in the early phases of the revolution, but which have outlived their usefulness. The reformers, confident that the Islamic society has put down deep roots in Iranian society, believe that the Islamic Republic is ready to enter a new phase in the implementation of the vision in which Iran can strengthen and normalize its interaction with the outside world secure that doing so will not undermine its Islamic vision or values. In the early years of the revolution, Khomeini’s refusal to compromise the Islamic vision in the interest of more pragmatic concerns was probably necessary in order to create an environment in which Iran, long alienated from its Islamic “self” by the forced secularization under the Shah, could restore and nurture its mystical side. But many of the policies that resulted proved

⁶² The event that precipitated the Ayatollah Khomeini’s decision to accept the UN cease-fire resolution that ended the Iran-Iraq War in 1988 was the downing of an Iranian passenger jet by the *USS Vincennes* in July of that year. The Iranians, convinced of the strategic omnipotence of the US and its determination to destroy the Islamic Republic, could not comprehend that the killing of an airliner full of Iranian civilians off for a shopping spree in Bahrain was nothing more than a horrible, tragic accident. Iran’s leaders were, rather, convinced that the incident was a sign of a US decision to become directly involved in the war as an ally of Iraq.

disastrous for Iran in the long-run. Boycotts in response to the hostage crisis and Khomeini's *fatwa* against British author Salman Rushdie devastated the economy by reducing oil revenues and access to foreign supplies of technical equipment and military and industrial spare parts, and technical advice completely dried up. Ideological purges cost military, technical, and bureaucratic expertise as more and more middle-class, educated Iranian elites fled the terror of the revolution. Imam Khomeini's campaign to mobilize Shi'a revolutions throughout the Muslim world drained scarce national resources and so isolated Iran in the region that its strategic vulnerability increased dramatically, paving the way to the 1980-1988 war with Iraq – all to no Islamist advantage – not a single Sunni regime fell to Shi'a revolution and Khomeini had to downsize his revolutionary agenda to “Islamism in one state.” State support for terrorism damaged Iran's credibility even among fellow travelers in the struggle against US hegemony, such as Russia and China – both of which fear Islamist uprising within their own borders. And terrorism made the US a more, not less, implacable foe. Land reform and redistribution of wealth, which had been one of Khomeini's highest priorities at the onset of the revolution, could not lift up the poor and the downtrodden if there was no wealth to redistribute.

President Khatami and the reformers came to believe, by the late 1990s, that it was time for Iran to reverse some of those disastrous early policies and replace the rigid and confining values of the early revolution with more modern values in a Shi'a package. Iran's post-revolutionary generation was chafing under the personal, educational, and economic restrictions of the old revolutionary ethic and sought a new set of Islamic values that allowed for greater political pluralism (albeit still within the Shi'a Islamic context), a gentler, more flexible interpretation of Islamic law, more protection for the poor, and greater social and political freedom for Iran's women. They also hoped to induce some of Iran's vast post-revolutionary diaspora to return and help rebuild and modernize their beloved homeland. But for that to happen, the regime would have to reassure them that they would be safe from persecution. In short, the reformers sought to liberate Iran from the increasingly sclerotic mindset of the reactionary clerics.

Most Iranians, even the Supreme Leader and at least some of the Guardians, recognized that if the Islamic Republic were to survive it would have to find ways to revive its moribund economy. Many of the most socially conservative clerics and politicians were the most adamant economic reformers, understanding that the best way to improve the economic well-being of Iranians would be to enter the global economic and political community more fully. The problem turned out to be doing so without

compromising hard-line revolutionary values. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini (who had previously insisted that Khomeini's *fatwa* against Rushdie was irreversible) issued no contradictory statements in September 1998 when President Khatami announced in a New York press conference that

We should consider the Salman Rushdie case as completely finished. Imam Khomeini as an Islamic jurist gave us his opinion about this matter and many other religious leaders have given us their opinions. . . . From now on we want to push a dialog among civilizations, not a war, and we hope we have entered this era.⁶³

By the late 1990s, it seemed that even the conservative clerics like Ayatollah Khomeini had accepted the necessity of compromise and reintegration of Iran's interests into the wider world. But as time went on, reform proved almost impossible to control: public disorder escalated and young people increasingly flouted Islamic mores, and the hardliners began to return to Imam Khomeini's view that integration is dangerous and inconsistent with the propagation of a righteous society based on Islamic values. The important thing, in their view, is to live according to proper Islamic values, not to sell out to pragmatic concerns. As Khomeini once explained to his followers:

Some persons have come to me and said that now that the revolution is over, we must preserve our economic infrastructure. But our people rose for Islam, not for economic infrastructure. What is this economic infrastructure anyway? Donkeys and camels need hay. That's economic infrastructure. But human beings need Islam.⁶⁴

The crackdown on reformers might be bitter medicine for the Iranian people at first, but the conservative clerics believe this crisis with Iraq will refocus their attention where it should be – on the national imperative of uniting behind proper Islamic values in order to defend the national vision against the enemies that surround it. And if they can, in the process, push the Great Satan further out of Iran's orbit, then perhaps Iran could afford the economic reform that all but the most mystical hardliners concede is necessary.

Iran's Ultimate Concerns: Create a Zone-of-Safety for the Vision

The Iranian hardliners are particularly concerned that the United States might try to influence the outcome of the political crisis in Iran, either by covert action (as it did during the 1951-53 nationalist revolution), by organizing a global boycott to "starve" Iran into submission, or by some sort of military intervention on humanitarian or human rights

⁶³ Quoted in Sciolino, *Persian Mirrors*, p. 182-183.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Mackey, *The Iranians*, p. 341.

grounds. The Iranian clerics, like many other leaders of Introverted States, had watched the unfolding events in Bosnia and Kosovo with increasing concern, fearing that the United States' vast military-technical supremacy had given it a completely free hand to shape the outcome, even of completely internal political events in nations that had values counter to its own. This anxiety had been one the principal motivations for Iran to acquire nuclear capabilities. Even though Shi'a scholars had long regarded such weapons as inherently evil and "un-Islamic" because of their indiscriminate nature, they were perhaps morally justifiable if used only against those who attack Islam. In this respect, at any rate, even the conservative clerics conceded that compromise on the Islamic injunction against indiscriminate military action that risks the lives of innocents was necessary in order to serve the greater good of defending Iran's Islamic vision against a hostile US determined to overthrow it in favor of their own, secular, materialist one.

Throughout its history, Persia / Iran has endeavored to defend its "righteous paradise" from a jealous outside world that seeks either to absorb it or destroy it. At no time has the xenophobic strain in the Persian historical plot been stronger than in the decades since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. The Iranian clerical regime has operated under the absolute certainty that, at least since the seizure of the US embassy in 1979, the American intelligence and foreign policy establishment has held the destruction of the Islamic Republic – as a last bastion of righteous resistance against the US goal of transforming the entire world in its trivial, hedonistic, and spiritually empty image – as one of its "Ultimate Concerns." In this campaign, the US and Iraq were partners for nearly a decade; and while they may have fallen out in recent years, the Great Yazid (Saddam Hussein) and the Great Satan still share this one common Ultimate Concern. In launching his aggressive insurgency in Khuzestan, Saddam Hussein is doing the Great Satan's work. But the Iranian hardliners realize Allah may be manipulating the Yazid to his own ends. In the blasphemous efforts to undermine the unity of the Islamic Republic, Saddam has enabled the unpopular and illegitimate conservative government to portray itself as a victim, and transform its public image from that of a corrupt cabal that highjacked Iran's budding democracy into defenders of Islam who, like Caliph 'Ali and Imam Husayn, will defend Iran's vision from the forces of evil that seek to destroy it, and the Iranian people with it.

Iran is, and always has been, the center-of-gravity in the Persian Gulf region by virtue of its geostrategic position, its natural wealth, its long experience of national unity and identity, and its cultural and spiritual superiority. And it has always regarded itself as a natural hegemon in the region by virtue of its moral and cultural superiority. The

ancient Persian Shahs established their hegemony by bringing civilization to the previously “unenlightened” peoples of Mesopotamia, Arabia, and the Levant. When the British withdrew their military presence “east of Suez” in 1971, the last Shah launched a misguided campaign to establish strategic hegemony in the Middle East, but failed because he sold Iran’s soul to the West and the Zionist enemy of Islam – Israel. The Islamic Republic tried, in the early years of the Revolution, to establish spiritual hegemony in the Islamic world by exporting its righteous vision, but the unenlightened Arabs were not ready. The Iranian regime understands that, for now, too much divides Iran from its Arab neighbors to allow it to establish overt hegemony. In its attempt to mobilize a worldwide Shi'a revolution during the 1980s, the Iranian regime learned that national identities remain stronger than sectarian ones. As Olivier Roy explains,

Iran's foreign policy . . . boxed itself into the Shi'a ghetto without actually controlling this ghetto . . . Prisoner of its own symbolism and of its revolutionary legitimacy, Iran was unable to make the strategic choices that would have restored it to its place as a great regional power.⁶⁵

Iran has since lowered its hegemonic expectations and seeks to create a strategic and cultural buffer zone around Iran that can enable it to exclude hostile influences (especially from the West) that might ally with neighboring states to the detriment of Iran.

Concerning its strategic buffer zone, the Intuitive orientation of the Islamic Republic has taken clear precedence over strategic pragmatism in the management of this crisis. While Iran's Ultimate Concern with maintaining a zone of safety for its vision clearly depends upon its ability to prevent Iraq from achieving the strategic hegemony that it has long sought in the Persian Gulf region, the conservative regime in Iran cannot bring itself to compromise with the one power that could ensure such Iraqi hegemony never emerges – the United States. The spiritual danger of allowing the US access to Iran far outweighs, in the strategic calculus of the hard-line regime, any pragmatic benefit that would accrue from tolerating the US military presence that alone can constrain and balance Iraq over the long term.

Iraq's Ultimate Concerns

Iraq's three key Ultimate Concerns – maintaining internal order and cohesion, defending territorial Iraq, and preventing hostile strategic encirclement – have all shaped

⁶⁵ Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, trans. by Carol Volk (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 184, 193.

its conduct in this crisis. Only one, however – preventing hostile strategic encirclement – is directly threatened by the outcome of events. The Ba’ath regime of Saddam Hussein has managed, by various means, to keep Kurdistan on a short leash and the Shi’a have also been fairly passive since the Republican Guard crushed the uprising of 1991. There seems little doubt that the Ba’ath will hold on to power, and as the UN sanctions regime has gradually disintegrated, the economic situation in Iraq is beginning gradually to improve. There is a nagging concern, however, among the Ba’ath elites that economic improvement will raise expectations faster than it raises living standards, leading to escalating dissatisfaction and a potential target of opportunity for hostile outside forces – either from Iran or from the US – to foment disorder, particularly among the Shi’a. The Iraqi Shi’a have always been wary of the Iranian concept of Islamic government, and the Ba’ath regime’s hope is that by stirring up Arab nationalist, anti-Iranian sentiment through its “Arabistan *Jihad*” it might gain some political cover for its crackdown on anti-Ba’ath clerics and rally the Shi’a around the nationalist cause.

Arabistan and the Shatt al-Arab have long been the focus of territorial disputes between Iraq and Iran, but in this crisis, Iraq’s ploy to “liberate” the Iranian Arabs has less to do with territory than it does with Iraq’s quest to restore its status in the Persian Gulf region and the Arab world in general (of course, annexation of the rich oil fields and production facilities around Abadan would certainly be a welcome fringe benefit). Iraq’s preoccupation with its own territorial security has, however, directly shaped its strategy in this crisis. Because it is so constantly aware of its own vulnerability to internal particularist forces that threaten to tear territorial Iraq asunder, the Iraqi regime has vastly overestimated the degree to which Iran harbors similar Ultimate Concerns. Iraq is counting on the Iranian Arabs to rise up in rebellion against the Persian/Shi’a regime as it fears Iraqi Shi’a or Kurds might do under similar circumstances. In reality, the likelihood of a true separatist uprising in Khuzestan – especially one that would seek alignment with Iraq – is extremely low. Moreover, even in the unlikely event that Iran were to lose some or all of Khuzestan, the blow would not lead to the inevitable devolution of the Iranian nation or its elimination from the race for regional hegemony, as many inside and out of Iraq fear might be the result of such events in Iraq. The Iranian Islamic vision could survive without the Khuzestan Arabs and might even be strengthened in the long run by the shared trauma.

At bottom, though, Iraq has stirred up this crisis in an attempt to forestall what it sees as the possible rise of hostile strategic encirclement. Iran is not a regional hegemon in Persian Gulf yet, but it is definitely the dominant military and economic power (apart

from the US) in the region and the most serious obstacle to Iraq's hegemonic ambitions. The Islamic Republic has gradually normalized its relations with the Gulf Arab states since it has moderated its policy on exporting Islamist revolution into the more conservative, Sunni Arab states. The Gulf Arabs are more wary of Iraq than they presently are of Iran, fearing that Iraq might once again make a bold grab for regional military domination in an effort to consolidate its internal cohesion and speed its economic recovery as it tried to do after the Iran-Iraq War. In order to avoid the possibility that the smaller Gulf states might arrive at some strategic alignment with Iran – perhaps one that even includes the US – Saddam Hussein uses his trumped up campaign on behalf of Arab nationalism to try to drive a wedge between Iran and the Gulf Arabs. Iraq hopes the current crisis, by forcing Iran into an even more belligerent stance, might revive Gulf Arab anxieties concerning a renewed Iranian commitment to mobilizing the “Shi'a International” against these Sunni monarchs ruling over heavily Shi'a populations. Although Saddam does not necessarily fool himself that Arab governments will fall for the ploy, he has little doubt that it will play very well to Arab public opinion on the street.

US Ultimate Concerns and Interests

The internal crisis in Iran and the specter of another Iran-Iraq war trigger a plethora of US anxieties and interests. The US shares the concern of the Gulf Arab states over the implications of a re-radicalized Iran for regional stability and global terrorism. The economic interests at stake are obvious: the spike in oil prices and reduced supplies that would result from closing Gulf shipping would trigger an economic downturn that could be disastrous for a world economy just beginning to emerge from the post-2001 global recession. The entry of Iran into the ranks of the declared nuclear powers – if it is in fact sustainable – creates a serious challenge for nonproliferation strategy, as the presence of a nuclear-armed Iran is likely to increase the motivations of states like Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey, and of course, Iraq, to consider changing their own nuclear status. Last, but definitely not least, the crisis reopens old political and emotional wounds first inflicted in the aftermath of the 1979 revolution and the hostage crisis.

The principal US Ultimate Concern at stake in this scenario, as in the previous one, is the straightforward one of maintaining strategic freedom-of-action to keep expanding and defending the US vision and values through open economic, political, and, when necessary, military engagement. Related to this Ultimate Concern is the strong US interest in upholding the international taboo against the use of weapons of mass destruction in general, and nuclear weapons in particular, as tools of state policy

anywhere in the world. This Ultimate Concern leaves the United States with three key strategic objectives in this scenario: to prevent Iran from closing down non-belligerent shipping in and out of the Persian Gulf; to maintain or reinforce US military presence in the region as necessary to secure its own interests and the interests and security of its allies; and to deter Iran from employing its nuclear weapons against US or allied forces in the region and – ideally – to deter it from using those weapons against Iraq.

The absolute necessity of keeping the Persian Gulf open has long been a central commitment of US strategy at least since the Royal Navy withdrew from the region in 1971. This is related not simply to US presence in the region, although that is an important consideration. More important is the general US commitment to the principle of freedom-of-the-seas, which is a value that flows directly from its Ultimate Concern with global strategic, economic, and political freedom-of-action. Since the end of the Cold War, Iran has been the only military presence with both the capability and, occasionally, the will to close the Gulf. Iran's access to overland pipelines through Turkey and Central Asia has significantly reduced its own dependence on Gulf shipping, and while to shut down the Gulf would create hardship for Iran, the potential strategic advantage of forcing the United States Navy out of the Gulf would more than offset the economic loss and could significantly advance Iran's Ultimate Concern with creating a strategic zone-of-safety for its vision. Prior to Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons, the US naval presence in the region was able to balance Iran sufficiently to prevent that from happening. Now that Iran has nuclear weapons, the US must either find a way to continue to balance Iran's strategic dominance in the region, or severely compromise both its relations with its regional allies and its Ultimate Concerns.

The Gulf Arab states have long shared the US strategic objective of preventing either of the Gulf's aspiring hegemons – Iran or Iraq – from achieving strategic dominance. Since the early 1990s, the Gulf Arabs had become somewhat less apprehensive where Iran was concerned; but the re-radicalization of the Iranian regime might well be a source of deep concern. There is, however, the possibility that the nuclear aspect of this crisis might lead worried Gulf sheikdoms to doubt US staying power in the crisis and to conclude that their long-term interests might be best served by declaring themselves neutral, keeping their heads down until the crisis passes, and thus not alienating the “mad mullahs.” But these states remain economically dependent on Gulf shipping and could not sustain such a position for very long. In addition, Western Europe, Japan, and increasingly China, also share a heavy economic dependence on the stability of the Persian Gulf oil supply and would almost certainly share US determination to keep

the sea lanes there open to set a clear precedent that no power can be allowed to close the Gulf to serve selfish national ends, however legitimate.

While it may prove easier to forge an international response to this crisis than to the Iraq scenario in the previous chapter, whatever the international reaction, the US will have to stand its ground. Iran is a much more credible hegemonic threat to the stability of the Persian Gulf region than Iraq is likely to be for quite some time yet. Even at the peak of its power, Iraq's geographic vulnerability – especially its limited access to the Persian Gulf and lack of a deep water port that could house a credible navy – limited its ability to establish and maintain regional hegemony even on the Arab side of the Gulf. The 1991 war and a decade of sanctions have left Iraq barely able to ensure its internal security, never mind to launch a major military adventure against Iran. If the US and the international community give in to Iranian nuclear blackmail in this crisis, they will never reverse that step without potentially costly consequences in both blood and treasure. To do so would, moreover, set a disastrous precedent for other aspirants to regional maritime hegemony (like China and India).

The United States was taken somewhat by surprise in this crisis. Although US interactions with Iraq remained touchy, relations with the reformers in Iran had been very gradually but steadily thawing since the election of President Khatami in 1997. Prior to the sudden “clerical coup,” the United States had every reason to expect the general pattern of improved relations would continue in parallel with internal reform. In fact, there remains every reason to hope that the trend toward US-Iranian rapprochement could resume in the event that the reformers succeed in launching a “counter coup” and force the hard-line government to agree to new, fair elections. Events in Serbia in the fall of 2000 created a powerful precedent for just such an outcome, and events in Iran seem to be headed in that direction. Iran is not, however, a nation broken and divided by war, and it could take a very long time for the illegitimate clerical regime’s will to break. The US and international reaction to the Iran-Iraq crisis could, and probably will, shape the outcome of the internal power struggle inside Iran. If the US enters the crisis in overt opposition to Iran and its interests, the result could be exactly what the hardliners running Iran hope for – the consolidation of anti-American sentiment behind a previously illegitimate regime. Moreover, Iran is not an unambiguous “bad guy” in this scenario. It is acting against Iraq in self-defense against a clear act of aggression. In this respect, its interests are legitimate, although the means it is employing are not, from the US point of view.

Perceptions and Misperceptions

In this scenario, a US deterrent threat is likely to be not only highly credible but also potentially incendiary – Iran may see a life-or-death standoff where, in fact, none exists. The challenge, thus, is to manage the interaction between the Intuitive US and the Intuitive Iranians so as to ensure that both sides keep a reasonable perspective on what is, and is not, really at stake. The danger in this scenario is not, as in the previous one, that Iran might not take US Ultimate Concerns seriously enough, but that it might overestimate its own centrality in US Ultimate Concerns, causing a dangerous escalation of the conflict.

- Intuitive Iran's entire historical plot is dominated by the struggle to defend its uniquely righteous national vision from external contamination. The vision itself needs such external threats to give it internal power. The Extroverted US, with its expansionist vision, is the perfect foil. Iran is predisposed to believe that the outside world in general, and the US in particular, are determined to see the Islamic Republic destroyed. So the Iranian regime, already under internal attack, is likely to misperceive even an essentially neutral US role in the crisis – such as a convoy to protect Kuwaiti shipping – as a sign of hostile intent. This is all the more likely, given that the regime has an internal political interest in portraying the crisis in such a light.
- In any crisis that, like this one, involves two Intuitive states, it is especially important to focus both strategic analysis and communication as closely as possible on the concrete issues at stake since the conflict of visions and values may well be irresolvable, at least in an atmosphere of tension and crisis. Iran has not, since 1979, been inclined to acknowledge the degree to which the US and Iran share strategic interests in the region – especially the shared interest in containing Iraq. Iran did, however, maintain strict neutrality in the Persian Gulf war, which may be a sign that they can be brought to recognize, if they do not yet acknowledge, such shared interests.
- The most dangerous Iranian perception is its characterization of the United States as the Great Satan. The conservative regime believes that the values of the Islamic Republic and those of the US are fundamentally and, more important for the unfolding of this crisis, mortally opposed. The US administration has been harsh in its condemnation of the “clerical coup” and has taken an outspoken position in support of those within Iran who are demanding new elections and the resignation of the current, illegitimate regime. The US hopes, it has said again and again, to see Iran step back on the road to democracy. The Iranian regime, for its part, has interpreted these statements – at least in its public utterances – as warnings that the US intends to take some kind of action to force the issue. The result is to make this crisis all the more unstable and potentially incendiary.
- The Iranian regime is illegitimate according to US values, emerging international norms, and even the emerging “neo-Islamist” values of the reformist opposition;

but according to its own values, the regime is absolutely legitimate and will continue to conduct its affairs according to righteous Islamic values as it interprets them.

- Rhetoric in the US may spin out-of-control in this crisis. In contrast to the Iraq scenario in which the most outspoken resistance is likely to come from the “no blood for oil” noninterventionist factions, this crisis is likely to trigger the deep shared trauma of the Iran hostage crisis. Loud voices, including many that would come down on the other side in the Iraq scenario, are likely to emerge, demanding that the US teach the “mad mullahs” in Iran a lesson they will never forget. This rhetoric will escalate dramatically if Iran attacks US assets in the region – even if only with conventional weapons – or if Iran or some opportunist (like Osama Bin Laden) launches a major terrorist attack against US citizens anywhere else in the world. In short, a measured and cool-headed response, which is absolutely necessary here, will be politically difficult to achieve.
- Iran absolutely believes it is the victim in this crisis. That conviction will tap into a deeper resentment at the international community’s failure to recognize and punish the crimes that the US and Iraq have committed against Iran in the past: the CIA overthrow of the 1951 Nationalist Revolution, the US collaboration with the repressive regime of the Shah, Iraq’s aggression against Iran in 1980, and its employment of chemical weapons against Iranian forces on the Fao peninsula in the closing months of the war (for which it received little more than a slap on the wrist from the self-appointed keepers of international norms).

C. DETERRING IRAN

There exists in this crisis a much higher risk of miscommunication than in the Iraq scenario because of the long history of emotion-laden animosity on all three sides, particularly the decades-long battle between Iran’s Islamist vision and values and the United States’ liberal-democratic ones. The US strategy in this crisis must accomplish at least four key objectives: stop Iran from harassing neutral shipping in the Gulf; avoid entanglement in the internal political struggle in Iran; avoid taking or appearing to take sides in the local dispute between Iran and Iraq; and defuse the crisis without Iran employing its nuclear weapons or the US having to decide whether or not to retaliate in kind. In order for the US deterrent to be credible without triggering a nuclear response, the US must send clear messages that

1. convince Iran that US Ultimate Concerns are deeply invested in the outcome of the crisis, but not in a way that is inherently hostile to Iran’s own Ultimate Concerns;
2. convince regional allies and potential international partners in resisting Iran’s attempt to establish maritime hegemony that their Ultimate Concerns are as much at risk; and

3. reduce Iran's perception of the utility of nuclear weapons in resolving the crisis to its best advantage.

As in the Iraq case, a US deterrent is likely to be credible, but it will have to be crafted with great care to ensure that the messages the Iranian regime receives are not unnecessarily provocative. One of the most important lessons from past interactions between the US and Iran that should inform decision-making in this crisis is that in the past, the clash of vision and values tends to blur understanding of the underlying strategic issues at stake *on both sides*.

1. An Iranian Strategic Calculus

The first step in crafting an effective deterrent in this scenario is to identify the underlying causes of the crisis, identify how those causes are playing out in the crisis, and thus understand both Iran's Strategic Calculus and its assessment of the utility of its nuclear weapons. Iran's Strategic Calculus focuses on three key underlying concerns:

1. Iran is presently under the control of a hard-line clerical regime with no internal political legitimacy and against which a significant percentage of the Iranian population is in open revolt. The Islamist vision itself is not at risk, but the power struggle over which political faction should oversee its implementation has important strategic consequences. In the context of this crisis, however, it is the clerical hardliners to whom the US must tailor its deterrent. Saddam Hussein has misread (based on Iraq's Ultimate Concerns and Strategic Personality) the degree to which internal chaos translates into strategic vulnerability in Iran and has tried to advance his own internal and regional aspirations by fanning the flames in Iran. The regime in Iran sees an opportunity to redeem itself and restore its *farr* by allowing the external crisis to escalate.

Strategic objectives:

- Hold on to internal power and control over the vision
- Use the threat of war to galvanize internal support for the regime and crack down on remaining internal opposition
- Limit the crisis to avoid another long and costly war with Iraq that will cause more suffering and further undermine the regime's *farr*
- Prevent outside intervention in the resolution of the internal political crisis.

Utility of Nuclear Weapons:

- Deter the United States from intervening to the benefit of either Iraq or the reformers
- Deter Iraq from escalating the crisis to a conventional military invasion.

2. The hardliners in Iran are alarmed that the Islamic Republic is becoming too “globalized” and want to restore a more xenophobic Islamist vision rooted in much more Puritanical Shi'a values and reverse the political and social effects of the reformist agenda. In particular, they seek to reverse the small steps the reformers have taken toward social liberalization and economic engagement with the West.

Strategic Objectives:

- Reverse “globalization” and re-isolate Iran from the infiltration of alien values, at least from the West
- Reestablish a social agenda based on conservative Islamic values and uncorrupted by “Westoxification.”
- Revitalize the revolutionary, mystical vision established by Imam Khomeini.

Utility of Nuclear Weapons:

- As a symbol of the power and determination of Iran's national vision
- As a warning to the West to keep its distance.

3. Iran believes its vision and values are under attack from the outside world, in particular, from the US and Iraq. Neither of those enemies will ever accept the Islamic Republic and leave it in peace. The hardliners believe now more than ever that the only way Iran can accomplish its internal objectives is to establish a strategic “buffer zone” within which Iran can resolve its internal political differences, consolidate its values, and implement its vision in peace.

Strategic Objectives:

- Isolate and contain Iraq by closing off its access to Persian Gulf shipping
- Force the US military presence out of the Persian Gulf region
- Maintain a non-belligerent relationship with the other Gulf Arab states and persuade them to accept a “Pax Iraniana” in the Persian Gulf.

Utility of Nuclear Weapons:

- Iran has tried to shut down the Gulf before, but US naval power was always dominant; nuclear weapons give Iran the muscle to enforce its buffer zone
- Deter Iraq from launching a broader invasion of Iran
- And establish Iran as the dominant power in the region, the defender of Islam.

2. Forging an Effective Deterrent

What immediately stands out as a shaping factor in this scenario is the fact that the United States is trying to deter an illegitimate regime that does not have the support of its population, causing a serious conflict of values for the US. Of its three Ultimate

Concerns at stake – vision, values, and establishment of a strategic buffer zone – maintaining control of the implementation of their version of the Islamist vision is clearly the one most direct, driving the strategic decision-making of the hard-line regime. Popular opposition to the regime in Iran in this case is much clearer and more outspoken than had been the case either in Iraq in 1990-91 (when Saddam Hussein enjoyed sometime raucous popular support not only inside Iraq, where it could be dismissed as state-orchestrated, but also among Palestinians in Jordan, Israel, and the occupied territories), or in Serbia in 1999 (when defiant Serbian citizens gathered in city centers wearing printed bull's-eyes and singing defiant nationalist rock anthems). This appears to create both a complication and an opportunity for US deterrent strategy. The complication lies in the moral quandary that would result if the US faced the prospect of launching a nuclear retaliation – or even a massive conventional one – against the actions of an illegitimate regime when to do so would almost certainly inflict massive pain and suffering on a public that does not support its actions. But the opportunity provided by the hard-line regime's lack of legitimacy is more problematic than it might seem at first glance.

The temptation will be strong to devise a US strategy that targets regime legitimacy, but to do so is probably a dangerous idea. The regime clearly *is* illegitimate, but the Extroverted US has absolutely no credibility within Intuitive Iran on this particular issue, even among the most liberal reformers. For the United States to do anything that appears to back the reformers is almost certain to hurt their cause and advance the goals of the hardliners: the deeply-felt conflict of vision and values is certain to render any US action in this regard suspect. Journalists and other American visitors to Iran have made much of the fact that individual Iranians like Americans and, in their private lives, embrace many aspects of American culture. A significant number of Iranians would even, if given the chance, emigrate to the US, at least temporarily. The Extroverted, Intuitive US is inclined to generalize from such anecdotal data that a disconnect exists between the Iranian regime and its people on the nature and extent of the US threat. Not so. As a nation, Iranians all along the political spectrum carry deep resentment of the past US role in their history and believe that their Islamist vision and the “expansionist” US vision stand in unalterable opposition. In that context, they assume that, in terms of their national vision and values, the US is a confirmed enemy not to be trusted. For this reason, the best thing the US can do to advance the cause of reform in Iran is to find a way to defuse this crisis *without* trying to advance the cause of reform in Iran. To be sure, the knowledge that the hard-line regime does not represent the will of

the people will have to inform deterrent options, but it should not enter into official rhetoric or strategic messages as this crisis unfolds.

That said, the opportunity exists to use the Iranian vision and values to US strategic advantage in this crisis in two respects. First, the Islamic regime recognizes that it has a moral imperative to protect its people from physical as well as moral danger. Martyrdom is venerated in Shi'a Islam as an individual choice, but there is nothing in Shi'a theology that empowers a regime to choose martyrdom for its entire population. In fact, quite the opposite is implied in the Shi'a concept of *taqiyyeh* – concealment in defense of the faith. This theological concept – which grew out of Shi'ism's historical status as a minority and often persecuted sect within Islam – calls for the “dissimulation of the truth” when necessary to protect the faith and its followers from religious and secular threats. It was the concept of *taqiyyeh*, in part, that enabled Imam Khomeini to accede to the UN cease-fire agreement in 1988. In doing so, he was compromising Iran's “lesser jihad” – the war to advance Iran's Islamic values against the apostate regime in Iraq – for the greater good of ensuring the continued survival of large numbers of Iranian innocents. To do otherwise would have undermined the *farr* and the survival of the Islamic Republic. Second, according to Shi'a theology, religion is the only legitimate justification for resorting to war. If the US manages to keep the strategic dialog strictly limited to prosaic issues like freedom-of-navigation and does nothing to challenge or perturb Iran's values, the hard-line regime will be hard put to start a dangerous nuclear exchange that will certainly rain wildly disproportionate suffering on Iran's innocents.

To summarize, an effective US deterrent strategy could be built around three basic elements:

1. In an Intuitive versus Intuitive scenario like this, one approach for reducing the level of risk is to neutralize the clash of visions as much as possible and focus instead on more prosaic, nuts-and-bolts interests. Separate the regional security issues from the internal Iranian political situation and avoid the regime legitimacy issue as far as possible. Let the Iranian regime know it can achieve several of its strategic objectives without resorting to nuclear use: it can crack down on internal opposition and try to galvanize its internal support; it can prevent the crisis with Iraq from escalating on its terms because the US will not back Iraq; nor will the US intervene in the internal political crisis; the hardliners can roll-back reforms if that makes them feel more secure; and it can maintain cordial relations with Iran's Arab neighbors. The hardliners are unlikely to be able to hold on to power for very long, and the US can deal with the implications for its long-term relations with Iran and other Islamist extremist states (like Afghanistan) later in a less incendiary strategic atmosphere.

2. Hold the line until the US can build an international response. Demonstrate a willingness to recognize Iran's legitimate desire for a strategic zone-of-safety for its vision without giving any ground on the fundamental US Ultimate Concern. Make it clear that there are two strategic objectives the hard-line regime in Iran will never achieve with or without nukes: it will not force US presence out of the Gulf region, and it will not establish a *Pax Iraniana* in the region.
3. Limit Iran's strategic options by boxing the clerical hardliners in with their own Islamic values. Don't take any actions that give them an excuse to launch a "defensive war" to advance their strategic and political agenda.

3. Deterrence and Long-Term Threat Reduction

Deterrence

In deterrence, the US should avoid making an explicit nuclear retaliatory threat for a number of reasons. First, to do so would automatically escalate the crisis. Second, to do so would also serve Iran's strategic objectives by enhancing the legitimacy of the hard-line regime. Finally, so extreme a response is probably unnecessary. The Iranian view of the US view of Iran will leave them in little doubt that the Great Satan would not hesitate to retaliate *at least* in kind or, more likely, disproportionately to any Iranian use of nuclear weapons against US forces, assets, or allies. The credibility of the US deterrent – even when unspoken – would be reinforced by Iran's view of US actions against Iraq since 1991, a country that the Iranians honestly believe was once a *de facto* US ally.

How does the US hold the line in the crisis without issuing an overt nuclear threat, such as increasing nuclear alert status? First, it is imperative that the US not make any move toward transferring forces out of the region, even if its regional allies are nervous. One option is to continue escort operations but offer to allow Iran to verify that ships and cargo are neither bound for Iraq or carrying Iraqi cargo to market. If Iran fires on US ships with conventional weapons, the response should be firm but proportionate, and should not involve retaliatory strikes against targets inside Iran (which could give the Iranian regime grounds to label the US the aggressor and escalate the crisis). Second, the US should focus its diplomatic energies on forging an international coalition not *against* Iran but in defense of international freedom-of-navigation in this economically vital region. The coalition would be most effective if the US does not take the lead. It might be possible to convince some neutral third party – Japan, or even better, China or India (both of which might compromise their own maritime aspirations in light of their growing dependence on Middle East oil) – to take the lead in enforcing the safety of neutral shipping in cooperation with Iranian observers.

The most important element of an effective deterrent in this crisis will be carefully avoiding giving Iran any excuse to start a shooting war with the US. In this respect, turning the Islamist regime's values against them can be a key to success. A central tenet of Shi'a theology regarding "just war" is the principle of *defa'* or "imposed war." The only uses of lethal force that Shi'a scholars recognize as legitimate in "interim regimes" (those Shi'a regimes – including the present Islamic Republic – governing in the absence of the Mahdi) are defensive wars on a spectrum from wars imposed by an actual attack (such as the Iraqi invasion of 1980) to those in which a community responds to some impending danger to *Shi'a territory* through a preemptive strike.⁶⁶ Shi'a theologians have consistently viewed the idea that wars could be launched in pursuit of more "secular" national objectives – such as establishing strategic hegemony – with suspicion. In fact, Iran never declared its war against Iraq a "jihad," even though it condemned Saddam as an apostate. Moreover, throughout that eight-year war, Iran never escalated unilaterally. The Islamic regime remained reluctant to resort to counter-population operations – missile and artillery bombardment of Iraqi cities – and only did so *after* Iraq initiated the "war of the cities" and may not have retaliated in kind for Iraqi chemical weapons attacks against Iranian forces on the Fao peninsula (although Iran is assumed to have had the capability to do so).⁶⁷

What this all suggests is that the chances are quite good that Iran will not escalate to open conflict with the US provided the US takes scrupulous care not to do anything that can be interpreted by the Iranian regime as an act of aggression against "Shi'a territory." As has already been pointed out, while the hard-line regime is not legitimate by any objective measure of political legitimacy, it believes it is acting in the best interest of its people and will take its religious responsibility to act in a way that ensures the survival of the community seriously. And on a more prosaic level, the hardliners will understand – as Imam Khomeini did when he "drank the bitter cup" and agreed to the UN-brokered cease-fire – that getting massive numbers of Iranians killed (whether quickly by US nukes or more slowly by conventional bombers and the ensuing effects of "collateral damage") will do nothing to enhance their legitimacy or advance the Iranian national vision. The wildcard lies in where Iran draws the line between the metaphysical

⁶⁶ Kelsay, *Islam and War*, p. 38.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 48-52. There is some evidence that Iran *may* have employed chemical weapons in response to Iraq's CW attacks late in the war. Even if that was the case, it does not change the fact that Iran did not *initiate* the escalation to chemical weapons.

threat from the United States' vision and values and a more immediate, concrete threat that might trigger a defensive, or preventive nuclear response.

Long-Term Threat Reduction

The success of longer-term US threat reduction and shaping strategies will require coming to terms with the way Introverted states like Iran see the world and their place in it and designing regional strategies and approaches to bilateral relations with Iran that take that view into consideration. What would such a strategy involve? First, resolving the “Iraq problem” (perhaps along the lines suggested in the previous chapter) would go a long way toward enhancing Iran’s sense of security and would remove a major flashpoint of regional crises. This would also serve to reduce Iran’s perception of the need for and utility of nuclear weapons, since the Iranian regime sees Iraq as a more immediate threat to its security than the US. Second, to ensure that it continues to see the US as a less immediate threat to its Ultimate Concerns, the US should take a strictly neutral stance concerning Iran’s internal political development. That does not mean the US cannot take steps to encourage reform – such as relaxing trade restrictions in response to steps toward democratization. What it probably does mean, however, is that the US should avoid declared policies aimed at “overthrowing” or even “reforming” the Iranian regime, and that any economic boycotts in response to anti-democratic developments in Iran should be quiet and unilateral. There are two reasons for this: first, failure makes the US look weak, not just in Iran but elsewhere in the region, and second, such policies would prove dangerously incendiary during the inevitable periods of crisis, like the one in this scenario.

A third approach to tailoring US regional strategy in the Persian Gulf to Iran’s Strategic Personality would involve maintaining US presence in the region in a way that secures the Ultimate Concerns of all the states in the region, *including* Iran. In doing so, the US might also, in the long term, reduce Iran’s motivation to devote resources to an expanded nuclear program that otherwise might go to the economic reform that all Iranians – conservatives and reformers alike – want. Such a strategy would mitigate the Iraqi threat to Iran – perhaps by tacitly approving Iranian conventional modernization (with outside help from Russia or China). It would also keep US hands off internal Iranian politics – period. It would come to terms with the inevitable religious aspect of Iran’s government and policy (as the US has already done with states like Saudi Arabia and Israel) and recognize Iran’s right to be a strong Islamic state. Finally, over time, it would afford Iran a reasonable and active role in maintaining the security of the Persian Gulf, ideally by gradually integrating it into formal regional security structures.

The bottom line is that time and the forces of history favor US Ultimate Concerns in this scenario, provided the US can play out the crisis with patience and a cool head. The hard-line regime cannot survive over the long-term – although what comes after, however devoted to reform, is not likely to be pro-US or even pro-Western for quite some time. Neither can this hard-line regime, or any other hard-line regime that comes to power in the future, permanently reverse Iran’s moves toward entering the global economy as a full and active participant. Iran has much too long a tradition of engagement – it is not and never has been a “hermit kingdom.” Khomeini’s extreme cultural and economic isolationism is as unsustainable given Iran’s Strategic Personality and Ultimate Concerns as was the Shah’s radical program of secularization and Westernization. Iran will continue to struggle to find the right balance between its two “selves,” and it will continue to cherish its status as “neither east nor west,” but it does not need to be at war with the outside world to do so. The best way to ensure that Iran does not become a permanent force for instability in the Persian Gulf is to create a strategic environment in which it can gain confidence in the durability of its vision and values without running roughshod over the Ultimate Concerns of its neighbors or of the United States.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The insights that emerge from the exercise of developing these scenarios through the Strategic Personality framework are useful not because these particular events are especially likely to happen, but because they reflect many of the characteristics of future crises. These are both internal, local, and/or bilateral crises that escalate rapidly to involve the US because of the “Kosovo Syndrome.” Both scenarios are examples of the Kosovo Syndrome at work – Iraq and Iran are trying to deter the US from employing its conventional supremacy to impose its will on what they see as essentially internal and bilateral disputes. In both scenarios, the opening gambit is to try to neutralize US military supremacy by deterring the United States from projecting “overwhelming force” into the crisis to force a resolution that suit its values and interests. US Ultimate Concerns are at stake in both scenarios not so much in the surface causes of the crisis, but in the nature of the final resolution – in both cases, the US is defending its Ultimate Concern with maintaining global strategic freedom-of-action. Finally, the nature of the crises will make forging alliances and partnerships much more difficult than was the case in 1991 – even NATO and regional allies whose interests are most directly at stake may be reluctant to go along with a US military response. This chapter will deal with three aspects of the problem of forging effective deterrents:

- The nature of the perceived threats that motivated Iraq and Iran in these scenarios and which might motivate other would-be challengers to US military supremacy in the years ahead;
- The perceived utility of nuclear weapons in alleviating those threats;
- And, the impact of Strategic Personality conflict on the effectiveness of US deterrence and how to use Strategic Personality insights to structure effective deterrence.

A. THREATS TO “CHALLENGERS’ ” ULTIMATE CONCERNS

1. Introverted States

Both of these scenarios involve a crisis in which the Extroverted United States is trying to deter an Introverted challenger from using nuclear weapons to achieve their strategic objectives. Most of the likely challengers in such crises in the future will be Introverted states, not because Introverted states are more aggressive than Extroverted ones, but because they are less likely to trust that collective, global approaches will

protect their Ultimate Concerns. In each of the scenarios the US must also act in partnership with Introverted regional allies who share, to some extent, anxiety over the implications of the United States’ “imperialism of vision and values” for their own societies. Finally, both the Introverted “challengers” and US regional allies do not see the crisis in global terms and, hence, believe that their Ultimate Concerns are much more seriously and legitimately at risk than are those of the United States. This perception could, in turn, lead both groups to doubt US “staying power” in the event that things get really messy.

As Introverted states, Iraq, Iran, and US regional allies share a few basic aspects of their threat perception. An understanding of what the Introverted states see as “threats” to their Ultimate Concerns is a crucial prerequisite to understanding how crises are likely to unfold, and to crafting appropriate deterrence and threat reduction approaches. The sense of unease implicit in the Kosovo Syndrome – that the United States will be able to intervene in future internal political disputes with impunity – is not the only endemic source of anxiety among Introverted states. At the most fundamental level, all Introverted states (even those for which the Kosovo Syndrome is not an issue) have experienced a heightened sense of cultural and political vulnerability in the face of the seemingly relentless spread of economic and political integration. Other threats to the Ultimate Concerns of Introverted states that might surface to trigger crises like the ones in these case studies include:

- A significant shift – either positive or negative – in the attitude of an Introverted state or its regime toward globalization. In the Iraq and Iran case studies, both regimes are struggling with the tension between the obvious economic advantages of engagement and the equally obvious risks to internal order, cohesion, vision, and values.
- The rise of acute regional tensions or instability. In both scenarios, dormant regional tensions provide fuel for transforming internal political problems into dangerous regional crises.
- Significant shifts in the internal political balance of an Introverted state. Threats to the internal political status quo is the triggering threat to Ultimate Concerns in both the Iraq and the Iran cases.
- The rise of a more xenophobic or paranoid political consensus or ideology. This is a more immediate factor in the Iran case, since the hard-line regime is trying to pull Iran back from the more “open” stance advocated by the reformers. However, Iraq’s sense of isolation and international persecution shapes both how its regime tries to solve its economic problems and its decisions during both crises.

- Changes in the international system that suddenly increase external stresses. In neither scenario is the crisis triggered by some sudden external event, although both are products – indirectly – of the post-Cold War changes mentioned above: the rise of US global hegemony, and economic globalization. In the case studies, both Iraq and Iran pursue strategic objectives designed to reduce the stresses and restrictions on their internal freedom-of-action brought on by those changes in the international system.

2. Sensing Iraq and Intuitive Iran

The parallels between Iraq and Iran diminish the further into the nature of their respective Strategic Personalities and Ultimate Concerns the analysis goes, illustrating some of the differences between Sensing and Intuitive states. The threats to Iraq's Ultimate Concerns in both scenarios are much more clear cut and quantifiable than in Iran's case, where there seems to be no measurable change in its military or economic position prior to the onset of the crisis. Territorial issues are extremely important in Iraq's strategic calculus, but only marginally so in Iran's. Material hardship is another important driver in Iraq's decision making. In contrast, the hard-line regime in Iran is consciously acting in ways that it knows will lead to at least a temporary – and perhaps permanent – decline in Iran's economic circumstances, but does not regard that as a decisive strategic consideration. Where Iraq sees economic recovery as essential to its Ultimate Concern with maintaining internal cohesion and stability, Iran believes that the costs of economic growth in terms of its Ultimate Concern with the purity of its national vision is unacceptably high. Iraq's sense of internal insecurity and external vulnerability flows in part from its military weakness after over a decade of sanctions. Iran's sense of vulnerability stems, in contrast, from the clerical hard-liners' perception that the commitment of the Iranian people to their Islamic vision – the fount of Iran's national strength – may be flagging.

Iraq, as a Sensing state, limits its strategic perceptions to the here-and-now and focuses on measurable and observable threats to its territorial integrity, social and political cohesion, and economic and military capabilities. The threats Iraq perceives to its Ultimate Concerns in both scenarios reflect its Sensing orientation:

- External or internal threats to a Sensing state's territorial integrity. The defense of "territorial Iraq" is a shaping factor in both scenarios. According to Iraq's strategic logic, the secession of any part of Iraq would lead the nation down a slippery slope toward disintegration.
- The perception of a dangerous imbalance between the threats to a Sensing state's Ultimate Concerns and its military and economic capabilities. This is the driving

factor for Iraq in the first scenario. The new Iraqi regime seizes the Burqan oil fields in a desperate attempt to jump-start its economy and accumulate the resources necessary to modernize both its economic and military infrastructures, that sanctions have left badly out of balance with Iraq's perceived threats. This is also a peripheral factor in the second scenario, in which Iraq hopes to capitalize on Iran's internal vulnerabilities to "even the balance" with an historic competitor and, worse, a potentially hostile regional hegemon.

- The rise of threats to a Sensing state's cultural cohesion and social stability. This is an implied threat to Iraq's Ultimate Concerns in both scenarios. In both cases, Iraq pursues external crises at least in part to rally what its regimes fear is flagging internal political cohesion as a result of ongoing economic hardship, and in the first scenario, weak internal regime stability.
- Natural or man-made disasters that restrict a Sensing state's resources and/or present the risk of social unrest or rebellion. In both scenarios, the effects of post-1991 economic sanctions constitute a man-made disaster for Iraq, and both crises are triggered by the Iraqi regimes' attempts to forestall widespread social unrest.

Iran, as an Intuitive state, extends its strategic perceptions beyond the here-and-now and monitors its environment to look for patterns that indicate potential threats to its national vision or events that might disrupt its progress toward implementing that vision. In the scenario in Chapter III, the nature of the threats Iran perceives to its Ultimate Concerns reflect its Intuitive orientation in several respects:

- Significant revision or realignment of an Intuitive state's national vision or the collapse of an existing national vision. Iran is undergoing a debate over the need to revise its national vision. The internal debate over stewardship of the Islamic national vision is a key factor precipitating the crisis. Although the national vision itself is not immediately at risk, the clerical hard-line regime perceived the changes undertaken by Khatami and the reformers as a threat to the long-term survival of the vision.
- The perception that the international system is moving in a direction counter to an Intuitive state's vision and/or is becoming increasingly hostile to that vision. The Iranian hardliners in the scenario are reacting less to a real shift in the attitude of the international system toward Iran than to their fear that there will be a negative reaction to the "clerical coup." However, that reaction is conditioned by the Islamic Republic's general perception that the international system, and the United States in particular, is hostile to its vision.
- Territorial and material setbacks threaten Intuitive states only when they undermine the coherence of Iran's national vision.⁶⁸ There is a territorial element

⁶⁸ The Kashmir crisis is an example of a territorial dispute whose outcome could severely undermine the national visions of two Intuitive states – India and Pakistan. For India to concede to demands for Kashmiri independence (or worse, to Kashmir's accession to Pakistan) would undermine its secular,

to Iraq's threat to Iran, but in this scenario, concern over losing territory is not a determining factor in Iran's strategic perception. There is no sense that the loss of part of Khuzestan would severely undermine the national vision, although obviously the Iranian regime would prefer not to see that happen. More to the point, the Iranian regime does not see its vision as any more at risk in Khuzestan than any where else in Iran, and sees a successful separatist movement there as highly unlikely.

3. Thinking Iraq and Feeling Iran

Iraq's strategic calculus is likewise much more straightforward than Iran's. Before initiating the crisis in the first scenario, the Iraqi regime has taken steps that it believes will reduce the likely cost of their actions. In both scenarios, however, the Iraqi regimes will have calculated an acceptable threshold of loss which, with good intelligence, should be discernable by outside observers. Iran's strategic calculus and threshold of loss are both much more subjective and almost impossible to discern with any degree of confidence (for them as well as for outsiders), since what constitutes "loss" is calculated as much in spiritual and moral terms as in material ones. Fortunately, given the nature of the Iranian vision and the values of the Islamic regime, its acceptable threshold of loss in human terms is also likely to be lower than Iraq's.

Iraq, as a Thinking state, conducts both its domestic and international affairs in accordance with a system of virtual "rules of nature" that have evolved over the course of its historical plot. One of the most important of these rules is that order and force are more effective means of controlling the nation's fate – both internally and externally – than compromise and cooperation. Because the principles that guide Iraq's strategic calculus flow so directly from its historical experience, they are also fairly transparent and their application in Iraq's strategic conduct are predictable. The threats that Iraq perceives to its Ultimate Concerns in both scenarios also reflect its Thinking orientation:

- The threat of a breakdown or significant restructuring of a Thinking state's social or political order. In the first scenario, the new Iraqi regime is just emerging from a period of political transition and, while it has managed to maintain internal order and control, it is not fully confident that order is sustainable. In the second scenario, Saddam fears that sluggish post-sanctions economic recovery might, over time, lead to a deterioration of internal order. He focuses his anxiety on the traditional sources of disorder inside Iraq – sectarian diversity and ethnic separatism.

ecumenical vision of India as a homeland not of Hindus but of Indians of all faiths. For Pakistan to abandon its claim on Kashmir would undermine its Islamic national vision as the only legitimate homeland for all South Asian Muslims.

- Its fundamental principles put a Thinking state at odds with its neighbors and the international system. Iraq's interpretation of its territorial prerogatives contributes directly to the crisis in the first scenario. Whatever the rest of the world says, Iraq believes it has an historically and legally justifiable claim to Kuwait. It also believes that it has the right to exact "payment" from its Gulf Arab neighbors for its past sacrifices in defending them against the expansionist Iranian revolution. In the second scenario, Saddam uses similar territorial and ethnic claims as an excuse to stir up trouble with Iran over "Arabistan."
- The internal logic governing the strategic conduct of a Thinking state is leading inexorably in the direction of confrontation with their neighbors. In both scenarios, Iraq's decisions are conditioned in large part by its belief that confrontation with its neighbors and with the US are inevitable because both are determined to keep Iraq unnaturally and unreasonably weak and vulnerable.
- The regional or global status of a Thinking state is not proportionate to what it believes its circumstances warrant. This is a major factor in Iraq's strategic conduct in both scenarios. In the first scenario, the new Iraqi regime seeks to enhance its internal legitimacy by raising its status in the broader Arab world. In the second scenario, Saddam attempts to prevent Iran from establishing regional hegemony while Iraq is still weak and recovering from the aftermath of sanctions by fanning the internal unrest resulting from the "clerical coup."

Iran, as a Feeling state, conducts its internal and external affairs according to the complex hierarchy of national and, particularly, Shi'a values that underlie its national vision. Unlike the seemingly immutable "laws of nature" that shape Iraq's decisions, Iran's system of values is constantly evolving in response to changes in its internal and external environment. As a result, Iran's strategic calculus is also more mutable and less reliably predictable than that of Thinking Iraq. The threats that Iran perceives to its Ultimate Concerns are often directly tied to its need to defend its system of values from outside contamination and reflect its Feeling orientation:

- A Feeling state perceives a threat to the system of values that underlies its national identity and reinforces its sense of internal cohesion and security. Alarm among clerical hardliners over the apparent deterioration of Islamic values as a result of economic liberalization and nearly eight years of Khatami's reformist presidency inspired the "clerical coup" that, in turn, triggered crisis in the Iranian scenario. The regime's Shi'a values also shape its strategic decision making in ways that might be predictable if they are accurately deciphered.
- A Feeling state believes its values put it at odds with the international system and its neighbors. The Islamic Republic of Iran has long believed that its Shi'a values are fundamentally discordant with the values the US seeks to promote in the world. It also sees itself as engaged in a moral battle with its neighbor Iraq. While its relations with other Gulf Arab states have improved, its values also have the

potential to create suspicion and tension, particularly if the Iranian hard-line regime adopts a significantly more radical international stance.

- The values that shape a Feeling state's strategic posture are the subject of an internal debate triggered by internal or external stresses. The clerical hardliners are in control of strategic decision making in Iran, but they are also engaged in a violent debate with reformers over whether and how Iran should adjust its Islamic values to its changing economic, political, and diplomatic realities. The reformers believe Iran's Islamist vision is strong and durable enough to withstand both increased external engagement (and the stresses that will result) and internal adjustments to reflect the maturing of the Islamic Regime. Hardliners fear that to give any ground on Shi'a values will lead Iran down the road to "secularization."

B. THE UTILITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Because their Ultimate Concerns and Strategic Personalities lead Iraq and Iran to perceive very different kinds of threats, they also lead them to different kinds of strategic objectives and perceptions of how nuclear weapons can help them achieve those objectives. The utility of nuclear weapons in pursuing specific strategic objectives is presented in each of the case studies, but comparing the overall utility calculi of Iraq and Iran points to some important differences that highlight the fact that in the post-proliferation world, nuclear deterrence is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. Iraq's strategic objectives involve seizing and holding territory and overcoming the operational disadvantages resulting from ten-plus years of sanctions that have badly depleted its conventional military capabilities. Iraq perceives the utility of its nuclear weapons in terms of their operational value in closing the capabilities gap and, it hopes, enabling it to achieve its territorial and material objectives. Iran's strategic objectives are much more nebulous. Its immediate objective is, of course, to contain Iraq and prevent the United States or other outside powers from providing either direct or indirect strategic assistance to Iraq by nullifying the Iranian blockade. But Iran's over-arching strategic objective is to create an environment in which it can resolve its internal political differences and implement its national vision secure from hostile outside interference, either from a meddling Iraq or from a hostile and, in Iran's view, more dangerous United States. For Iran, the utility of its nuclear weapons is much more symbolic – they demonstrate Iran's ability and determination to quarantine and, if necessary, defend its vision to the death. But neither the Iranians, nor their opponents, are likely to know precisely what that means.

The Iran-Iraq War provides some additional insight into the distinctions between how Iraq and Iran might view the utility of their nuclear weapons. For Iraq, which started

the war by invading Iran in September 1980, it was a “sovereign’s war,” the objectives of which were to occupy and annex disputed territory and impose a physical military defeat on Iran. Assessing the situation within the limits of its own strategic calculus, the Iraqi regime assumed that after the costs of initial military setbacks – which were substantial – sank in, the mullahs running Iran could not help but conclude that the costs of continuing to resist Iraq’s political and territorial demands were prohibitively high. In operational terms, Iraq’s military means were constrained only by its objectives and technical capabilities – it used everything it had. Iraq employed both massive ballistic missile attacks against Iranian cities and chemical weapons against Iran – decisions that were informed purely by military necessity, not moral considerations. It almost certainly did so because Iraqi leaders were confident that they enjoyed some degree of conventional superiority over Iran – or, at worst, conventional parity. It is telling that in the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq did not use all the capabilities it had at hand (particularly its chemical weapons), most likely because its leadership comprehended that to do so would invite a level of US retaliation far in excess of any advantage that could accrue by its holding on to Kuwait.

For Iran, its long war against Iraq constituted a national “people’s war.” The entire Iranian nation was united in a defensive war to defend the territory of the Shi’ā vision against an enemy that was materially more powerful and diplomatically less isolated and persecuted. Imam Khomeini succeeded in convincing the people of Iran that they were united in a defensive battle to the death against an apostate regime determined to destroy Iran and, more importantly, its righteous Shi’ā revolutionary vision. It was a battle that would, Khomeini warned, require material and social sacrifice far out of proportion to the prosaic interests Iran was defending – its territorial claims in the Shatt al-Arab, sovereignty over a tiny proportion of Khuzestan, and control of the oil facilities at Khoramshar and the port at Abadan. Iran could and would survive without these “things” but it could not survive if it compromised its vision. In this respect, Iran was not so much concerned with traditional “strategic” motivations but with much more eternal, mystical, Islamic ones. As a result, its strategic objectives – apart from pushing Iraqi forces out of the territory of Shi’ism – were much more nebulous than Iraq’s, as was its threshold of acceptable losses. Iran’s religious motivations also governed its conduct of the war, and in keeping with the Shi’ā doctrine of “imposed war,” it did not escalate at any point in the eight year conflict, even when it would have been to Iran’s military advantage to do so. Iran refrained from launching ballistic missile attacks against Iraqi cities until after Iraq initiated the “War of the Cities,” and even after Iraq used chemical

weapons against Iranian troops, it refused to retaliate in kind.⁶⁹ It is important to note that when the Ayatollah Khomeini finally did decide that Iran had reached the limit of its capacity to accept additional costs, he did so not because of anything Iraq did but because he became convinced (inaccurately) that the *USS Vincennes* incident was a signal that the United States was about to enter the war as an ally of Iraq's.⁷⁰

Because they perceive it so differently, reducing the utility of Iran's and Iraq's nuclear weapons pose quite different kinds of problems. For Iraq, the utility of their nuclear weapons is clearly operational. In the scenario, Iraq hopes it can use its nuclear-armed SCUDs either to intimidate the US and its regional allies and avoid a US military buildup or, failing that, to attack US forces in the early stages of such a build-up. Either way, Iraq sees its nuclear weapons as powerful force-multipliers, capable of making up for its insurmountable conventional disadvantage. The only limit on Iraq's perception of the operational utility of its nuclear weapons is how much the regime is willing to pay to hold on to Burqan. Given a clear retaliatory threat, the Iraqi regime is likely to conclude (as it did in 1991) that it would do better to withdraw to fight another day. Iraqi commandos might, for example, launch a "take-down" operation, and arrest and execute the "insurgents" – Iraq saves the day, returns the facilities to Kuwait, hopes for a reward for its trouble, and plots its next move.

The biggest advantage for US deterrence against Iraq is that it has the option of responding unilaterally – the United States could, if need be, deliver a credible deterrent threat even without regional allies, although obviously it would rather not have to do so. Unilateral response is probably not an option against Iran, where the role of nuclear weapons is much more symbolic and, in some ways, less predictable and hence more perilous. Iran is using its nuclear weapons to back up its right to resolve its internal political crisis and its external differences with Iraq in its own way. But it also clearly sees its nuclear weapons as a talisman to ward off the Great Satan. The Iranian regime wants to establish and maintain a "buffer zone" to prevent a Kosovo scenario. Fortunately, absent an overt provocation from the United States, Iran's values are likely to place significant limits on the operational utility of its nuclear weapons, in part because it is so thoroughly convinced that the US is determined to destroy Iran on the least excuse

⁶⁹ Kelsay, *Islam and War*, p. 50-51.

⁷⁰ Iraq concluded that the decisive factor in Iran's decision to end the war was its use of chemical weapons in Kurdistan and on the Fao peninsula in early 1988. While the Iraqi chemical attacks almost certainly influenced Iran's thinking, the timing of the *Vincennes* incident in July and Iran's acceptance of the UN cease-fire barely two months later, along with later statements by Iranian officials, favor the alternative interpretation of what constituted the decisive factor in Iran's decision.

(the strategic rationale that followed the *USS Vincennes* incident). The wild card in this scenario is, of course, determining what Iran might see as a provocation. Iran's history provides strong evidence that its perception of the US as a metaphysical threat will not translate into a sense of immediate threat, absent some provocative move by the US against what Iran regards as the “territory of Shi’ism” – the Iranian homeland. In this case, reducing the perceived utility of Iran’s nuclear weapons will depend on how well the US can separate its determination to maintain open traffic in the Persian Gulf from any perception that it is intervening against Iran or on behalf of Iraq. It seems conceivable that Iran might have regarded the *Vincennes* incident in such a light, pointing to the absolute necessity of avoiding such accidents. Unilateral action under these circumstances is probably impossible, and definitely risky. The greater the extent to which the US can expand participation in operations to keep the Gulf open to include neutral states and thus dilute the provocative aspects of the US military presence (not to mention the risk of provocative and potentially escalatory accidents), the more likely it is that the crisis can be resolved without nuclear employment.

C. DETERRING IRAQ AND IRAN: COUNTERING POTENTIAL “CLASHES OF STRATEGIC PERSONALITY”

How can analyzing the Iraq and Iran cases through the lens of Strategic Personality contribute to structuring future deterrents (against these would-be challengers, or others) that are both credible and effective? The case studies in the previous two chapters point to a few potential problems that emerge from conflicts between the Strategic Personalities of the United States and potential challengers.

1. Extroverted United States and Introverted Challengers and Allies

The likely personality conflicts between Extroverted and Introverted states have an important effect not only on the US ability to deal with its likely opponents but also with its regional allies. The fear of the relentless American drive to “export” its national vision and values is not limited to states that see the US as a strategic competitor. Current and potential allies will not cooperate with the US if they believe that to do so will require them to accept, along with strategic assistance, the whole package of US political, economic, and social values. The United States may not intend to set such a requirement, but in most cases, it will have to bend over backwards to ensure that such concerns on the part of its Introverted allies are addressed. And addressing those concerns may require limits on US strategic objectives since Introverted allies are likely to be extremely

sensitive to anything they see as a precedent for the US using its strategic dominance to impose its vision and values on a fellow Introverted state, whether ally or opponent.

Dangerous international crises can evolve quickly out of purely internal events among Introverted states. Especially in light of the Kosovo Syndrome, deterring US military intervention will be a high strategic priority whenever an Introverted state sees the need to use force, internally or externally, to defend its Ultimate Concerns. Where the United States has no particular strategic interests at stake, where it has no military presence invested, or where nuclear weapons are not involved, this might be a manageable problem. The United States can intervene, or not, as its interests dictate. But where US Ultimate Concerns are at stake – as is the case in both the Persian Gulf scenarios presented here – this Introverted “hair-trigger” can be a serious and potentially very dangerous problem if US responses are not measured and carefully thought out. Fortunately, most of the likely problems can be anticipated by analyzing the balance of Ultimate Concerns with an eye toward the likely “clashes of Strategic Personality.”

2. Sensing Iraq versus Intuitive United States

As a Sensing state, Iraq has a clear threshold of acceptable losses, which probably equals the absolute minimum force capability the regime believes it needs to fulfill its most basic Ultimate Concern – holding together territorial Iraq in the face of internal rebellion in Kurdistan or the Shi'a south. This presents a more clear-cut, if not necessarily an easier, deterrence challenge for the US, since it is possible to determine – based on intelligence and past experience – how much force is needed to deter Iraq. The downside is that Iraq is likely to assume that the United States has a similarly consistent threshold of casualty tolerance that can be derived from its conduct in previous engagements. Based on its perception of the “Vietnam Syndrome,” plus bolstering examples like Beirut and Somalia, Iraq is likely to assume that the threshold of US casualty tolerance is very low. This misperception could increase the risk that Iraq might see an operational advantage to be gained by playing its nuclear card early in hopes that inflicting large numbers of casualties on US forces before a build-up is complete might cause the Americans to cut and run. This perception also provides a hint as to Iraq’s likely targeting strategy: to aim for the greatest operational effect by striking at US forces early in the crisis.

The US deterrent can do a couple of things to counter the risks inherent in Iraq’s misperceptions. First, it can (as the Bush administration did for chemical weapons in 1990-1991) make the nuclear taboo itself an issue, sending the clear message that any

nuclear use by Iraq, however limited, will bring a massive US response. Second, US deterrent signals can make clear to Iraq that killing any number of Americans will bring the opposite of its desired effect. And finally, the United States can deny Iraq any ripe targets for its nuclear deterrent by relying in the early stages of the conflict on stand-off capabilities. In both cases, the US needs to be precise in the messages it sends to Iraq during a crisis – telling it not how we want Iraq to *be*, but what we expect it to *do*.

Sensing Iraq does not see itself locked in a life-or-death struggle with the United States for its national survival; it sees itself locked in a life-or-death struggle with the intractable forces of its own historical plot: the centrifugal forces of regionalism and sectarianism. It sees itself engaged in a game of “chicken” with the United States and believes that it can win simply by hunkering down and waiting the US out. In this respect, the key misperception may be on the part of the US which, as an Intuitive state, believes the Iraqi regime is engaged in a life or death struggle with the United States. In 1991, this led the US to conclude that it had defeated Iraq when Iraq believed it had, in fact, “won” the war. The danger of this misperception is twofold. First, the failure to understand the degree of “defeat” it needed to inflict on Iraq handed the regime there an important moral victory (and one that the new regime in the Chapter II scenario believes it can repeat). Second, it led the United States to vastly underestimate the degree to which military defeat would translate into real changes in the Iraqi regime’s internal and external behavior. The message here is that US strategy will benefit to the extent that it enters a conflict with an opponent like Iraq with realistic expectations of the likely outcome and what is going to be required to achieve a more desirable and permanent resolution of the underlying causes of the problem.

3. Intuitive Iran versus Intuitive United States

The strategic calculus of Intuitive Iran is not as straightforward as Iraq’s since it does not depend solely on empirical measures of power. As a result, the rungs on the “ladder of escalation” are unlikely to be clearly defined even within the Iranian ruling elite, leaving a great deal of room for improvisation and, more dangerously, misinterpretation. Fortunately, while US Ultimate Concerns are at stake in the crisis with Iran, its underlying vision is not directly threatened. But Iran’s is, and US strategy should take that into consideration in order to avoid increasing Iran’s sense of threat. The best way to counter the increased risk that results from the opacity of Iran’s strategic calculus is for the United States to focus its strategy and military operations very closely on what is really at stake – the right to free navigation in the Persian Gulf, not the survival of the

Islamic regime – and try to get Iran to do the same. To the extent that the US can enlist the cooperation of neutral third parties, this approach can go far toward lowering the level of risk on both sides.

Intuitive Iran does see itself locked in a life-or-death struggle with the United States, but its stance is normally a defensive one. Iran's long record of covert support for terrorism is a long way from risking an overt nuclear attack against the US, which the Iranian regime understands would be certainly suicidal. The Islamist regime is likely to remain reluctant to escalate its confrontation with the US to a point where the Great Satan might have clear justification to annihilate the Islamic Republic. The key to getting through this crisis without a nuclear exchange is to keep the lid on emotions as far as possible on both sides, and the United States will have to assume the burden of doing that. Iran clearly sees the utility of its nuclear weapons in symbolic terms, and its opening nuclear threat is primarily a message to the US to keep its distance. Likewise, Iran's targeting strategy is more likely to go for the symbolic punch rather than operational effect. Actually killing large numbers of Americans would only invite the certain wrath of the Great Satan, something Iran does not want to risk doing. One "symbolic" target might be Iraq, and US deterrence strategy should consider how to deal with such a possibility, perhaps by emphasizing its determination to uphold the nuclear taboo.

4. Thinking Iraq versus Feeling United States

One constant in Iraq's strategic behavior is that its actions are almost always dictated by "reason" rather than by passion. When Iraqi regimes make mistakes – and they have made big ones – they do so because of miscalculation or misreading the Strategic Personality of their opponents. In the months leading up to the 1990-1991 Persian Gulf crisis, for example, the Iraqi regime imposed a degree of strategic consistency and cost benefit analysis on the Feeling US that turned out to result in drastic miscalculations of the risk Iraq would be taking in invading and attempting to annex Kuwait. Iraq engaged in similar "mirror-imaging" in its war with Iran, which led Saddam to expect a short war. Consistent with Iraq's Thinking orientation, however, Saddam reacted to his overwhelming military setbacks in January to March 1991 the way he had expected Iran to react in 1982 – he ran the numbers and concluded that the costs of holding on to Kuwait had become too high. The Feeling US, however, tends to treat with Iraq in more subjective, value-oriented terms. Iraq then superimposes its own "logic" on US value-coded messages – as it did regarding its "border dispute" with Kuwait in 1990 – and stands to get it very wrong. Translating value-coded messages into more explicit,

objective terms is particularly important where the use of nuclear weapons is concerned. As a Sensing, Thinking state, Iraq will not automatically attach the same qualitative uniqueness to nuclear weapons that the value-oriented US does. Unless the United States makes absolutely clear the extent to which it regards the employment of nuclear weapons – *however small and against whatever targets* – as a heinous act, in-and-of-itself worthy of a devastating US response, the Iraqis are likely to see their nuclear capability as more destructive, more efficient, and no less usable than any other conventional weapon in their arsenal.

5. Feeling Iran versus Feeling United States

The conflicts of values that separate the United States and Iran have been and will continue to be the single greatest barrier to rapprochement between them. Those conflicts, and the passions that often accompany them, also threaten to be a source of peril in future bilateral or regional strategic confrontations. There is a serious risk that emotions will out-pace cool-headed rationality on both sides; but since the United States has – or is perceived as having – less at stake in regional crises involving Iran, the burden will be on it to keep the emotional temperature under control. The most important element of forging deterrent strategies that will keep crises from spinning out of control will be keeping the focus only on those values which are immediately at risk – such as freedom-of-the-seas – even if that means compromising some values that are less immediately at risk – such as the right of the Iranian people to a democratically elected government. This by no means implies that the United States should abandon or even compromise its values, only that it should carefully prioritize them: advance those most central to US Ultimate Concerns *at stake in the crisis at hand*, and avoid allowing the most incendiary and peripheral ones to become the central issue, either intentionally or unintentionally.

D. THREAT REDUCTION WITHOUT THE KOSOVO SYNDROME?

Both of the scenarios presented in this study point to the same general (and politically troublesome) conclusion: the only way permanently to resolve the underlying causes of the cycle of crisis in the Persian Gulf region is to address the Ultimate Concerns of its two biggest powers – Iraq and Iran. And both scenarios suggest that the most effective way to do that is to build regional security structures based on a regional consensus (not a US fiat) that includes everyone – even the perennial “bad boys” like Iraq and Iran – and leaves much of the responsibility for engineering, monitoring, implementation, and enforcement inside the region. Any US military contribution –

military presence, theater missile defense, intelligence sharing – will eventually have to include everyone, even the states whose regimes we find objectionable in terms of US vision and values. The only way to counter the Kosovo Syndrome and forge “acceptance” among the small and medium powers – in this region and elsewhere – may be to commit to a “hands-off” policy concerning the internal affairs of states like Iraq and leave the enforcement of “human rights” issues to neutral or multilateral agents. At the same time, the United States will have to maintain a conventional military presence in the region that sends two clear messages. First, the United States must constantly reinforce its commitment to maintaining its presence in the region even in the face of potential nuclear blackmail, not only because of the obligations of existing alliances and friendships but *because US Ultimate Concerns absolutely require it*. Second, the United States must send clear messages to any potential nuclear challengers, anywhere in the world, that no nuclear arsenal will be enough of a force multiplier to ensure national survival for a state that uses nuclear weapons against the US or its regional allies.

To argue that deterrence and threat reduction strategies should rest on a foundation of cooperative regional security structures sounds a little like “mom and apple pie.” Of course regional cooperation is good and continued regional tension and competition is bad. But “regional security structures” cannot mean the same thing in the Persian Gulf region that it does in Western Europe, any more than it does in Asia. What precisely “regional security” does mean in the Persian Gulf context is beyond the scope of this study, but the Iraq and Iran cases do point to a few key characteristics. First, any future Persian Gulf regional security structure will eventually have to address the Ultimate Concerns of Iraq and Iran because, for better or worse, they are the region’s strategic centers-of-gravity. They are the largest states in the region and are, by virtue of their combined natural and human resources and their geostrategic positions, its dominant economic and strategic powers. Any regional security structure designed to isolate rather than integrate them has no more chance of establishing long-term security and regional stability than would an Asian security structure that excluded China and Japan, or than did the post-Versailles system that isolated Germany and the Soviet Union between the two World Wars.

A second necessary characteristic can best be explained by looking at the Southeast Asian experience. ASEAN is not an “Asian NATO” or an “Asian EU,” and whatever collective security structures emerge in the Persian Gulf will share ASEAN’s distinctly “Introvert-friendly” character that respects national prerogatives to a much greater degree than does, for instance, the EU. Introverted states are even less likely than

Extroverted ones to abdicate even limited amounts of their national sovereignty to collective entities – even ones made up solely of fellow Introverted states. Any future Persian Gulf cooperative security structure will have to operate by consensus and, like ASEAN, its progress will be constrained by the necessity to subordinate collective good to the Ultimate Concerns of individual members. But no other structure has much hope of being sustainable, certainly not without a degree of US pressure that would doom the effort before it even left the gates.

The final characteristic of a successful regional security structure in the Persian Gulf region is likely, also, to be the most politically controversial: it will have the best chance of success if it is not predicated on internal regime reform in Iraq and Iran. There are, to be sure, two alternative approaches in this regard. The first is to undertake to use US global supremacy to force internal changes in all those regimes that the United States finds strategically and politically objectionable. This will require sustainable levels of political will, material investment, risk tolerance, and international consensus that seem unlikely to materialize at any time in the foreseeable future. Theater ballistic missile defense could reduce the required degree of risk tolerance, but would have little effect on the level of conventional force and political entanglement that would be required, not to mention the political willingness to withstand the escalation of terrorist attacks against US assets that would almost certainly result. Unless the US is willing to undertake the “reconstruction” of Iraq or Iran, what comes next is likely either to be just as hostile to the United States for some time to come, or unsustainable. If the US was not willing to undertake the burden of invading and occupying Iraq in 1991, it certainly has not become more willing to do so in the ensuing decade. And beyond all this, it is a virtual certainty that US regional allies like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait will balk at such a solution, which runs the risk of isolating the US in the region. The second option is to maintain the status quo and continue to cope with an endless cycle of crisis.

Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has expressed concern that the “matter-of-fact acceptance of [US] hegemony is wearing off” and that, in response, US strategy will have to “find a balance between abdicating our convictions to multilateral institutions and imposing them on the world by fiat.” Kissinger remains confident that the United States will remain the dominant power in the 21st century, but warns that the “challenge is to see if we can translate our power into an acceptance of some kind so that every foreign-policy issue does not become a test of our strength, which will drain us domestically and breed resentment abroad. We must move from imposition to

consensus.”⁷¹ What Kissinger is addressing is, in a sense, the fact that in the post-Kosovo era the United States must find ways to advance its Ultimate Concerns that are more responsive to the Ultimate Concerns of small and medium powers – even the ones that the US regards as “troublemakers.” The alternative is the establishment of an Imperial US that even our allies are likely to resist and for which it is far from clear there exists any domestic political will. No where is the challenge of finding regional security approaches that force acceptance without exacerbating existing resentments greater than in the Persian Gulf.

⁷¹ Quoted in Fareed Zakaria, “America’s New Balancing Act,” *Newsweek*, August 6, 2001.

APPENDIX A
THE STRATEGIC PERSONALITY TYPES

THE STRATEGIC PERSONALITY TYPES¹

The underlying motivations for any state's strategic conduct can be found by focusing on its Ultimate Concerns – the set of material, moral, or ideological factors that have emerged over the course of the state's history as the keys to its long-term survival, cohesion, and sense of national well-being. Events constantly buffet a state's Ultimate Concerns. How various states perceive the effects of events, identify threats or vulnerabilities, and decide on the best course of action to advance or defend their Ultimate Concerns is shaped by their habitual perceptive and decision-making styles.

The Strategic Personality Methodology breaks down these predispositions into three parts: a state's orientation to the outside world (Introverted or Extroverted); what kinds of information it pays the most attention to and invests with the most credibility (Sensing or Intuitive); and how it typically analyzes that information, defines its interests, and decides how to act (Thinking or Feeling). These three aspects combine to make up a state's Strategic Personality. The Strategic Personality Typology groups the states' unique personalities according to general, shared characteristics to facilitate analysis and comparison. Not every state of each type will display every characteristic in these descriptions of the pure types. The manifestations of Strategic Personality Type vary from state to state.

A. INTROVERTED STATES (I)

Introverted (I) states look inward to identify their national interests, see the international system as a loose conglomerate of autonomous actors, see their history as self-contained, are boundary sensitive, and seek primarily to defend their Ultimate Concerns against external stresses.

Through much of their history, the Introverted states all had relatively self-contained historical plots. In some cases, this was the result of geographic isolation (as in Japan and, to some extent, India). In other cases (China, for example), isolation was at least in part by design. In either case, the historical development of the Introverted states centered on the process of consolidating and maintaining internal social and political

¹ The material in this Appendix is excerpted from Caroline F. Ziemke, Philippe Loustaunau, and Amy Alrich, *Strategic Personality and the Effectiveness of Nuclear Deterrence*, D-2537 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, November 2000).

stability, which in turn depended on a strong sense of collective identity. Introverted states have self-contained Ultimate Concerns rooted in the struggle to maintain and defend their autonomy and internal cohesion (whatever the source) from external pressures.

The engine that drives historical development and change in the Introverted states is a cyclical process of the rise of internal stresses on the social and political structures; their resolution, often through increasing consolidation of power; followed by a period of growth and change that gives rise to yet another set of internal stresses (some triggered by external events). The cyclical pattern that emerges in the historical plots of most Introverted states and the sense of internally-shared experience and historical autonomy account for the central characteristics of the Introverted Strategic Personality: they look inward to identify and consolidate their national interests; they see the international system as a loose conglomerate of independent and autonomous states; they see their own historical plot as self-contained; they are acutely boundary-sensitive; and they seek to defend their Ultimate Concerns against external stresses.

One effect of their self-contained historical plots is the Introverted states' keen boundary sensitivity. Boundaries are central to the Introverted states' sense of security to a much greater degree than is the case for any of the Extroverted states. For the Introverted states, strong collective identity depends on strict delineation of in-groups ("us") and out-groups ("them"), and clear definitions of the shared characteristics that define the boundaries between the two, which are central in their national myths. As a result, the Introverted states tend to draw stark and rigid distinctions between themselves and the rest of the world that probably never were realistic, and certainly are not so in the modern world, but that are nonetheless central to their identity. Introverted states often have geographic myths that place them physically and spiritually at the center of the universe – as in China's Central Kingdom, and Persia/Iran's Center of the Universe myths. At its extreme, this tendency can lead to a total lack of interest in or knowledge of the outside world. At times, the Introverted state's sense of boundaries can take an exaggerated form and translate into a hyper-isolationism and xenophobia that shuts out the outside world altogether and attempts to purge its internal influence as, for example, the Taliban have attempted to do in Afghanistan. But almost as often through history, the Introverted orientation has led states to pursue expansionist strategies that aim to build buffer zones around their Ultimate Concerns, as Japan did prior to World War II. Still, the Introverted state's boundary sensitivity usually takes a much more moderate and benign form, resulting in an Introverted Strategic Personality that relies primarily on

introspection in adapting to stress and change, regardless of whether the source of that stress is internal or external.

This boundary sensitivity does not necessarily translate into either unilateralism or isolationism in the Introverted state's participation in the international system. It has been an increasingly undeniable reality of the Introverted states' historical experience since the European Age of Exploration that, in the modern era, isolation and quarantine are counterproductive and probably not sustainable. States with an Introverted orientation do not see states within the international system as wholly unrelated. Rather, they see the international system as comprising independent actors who, by virtue of having to live in proximity with one another, must find ways to cohabit, preferably peacefully, with their neighbors without allowing those neighbors to interfere with their internal prerogatives. The defensive mindset of the Introverted states leads them to see the international system as a threat to their Ultimate Concern, one that must be vigilantly managed. While the Introverted states understand that managing and defending their Ultimate Concerns and interests requires a certain degree of interaction and engagement with the outside world, they do not automatically accept the notion that the International System should reshape or reform the neighborhood as a whole.

B. EXTROVERTED STATES (E)

Extroverted (E) states look outward to identify and consolidate their national interests, see the international system as an integrated body that must cooperate and compete for the good of the whole, see their histories as correspondingly integrated, are relatively less boundary-sensitive than are Introverted states, and have Ultimate Concerns rooted in their ability to share, export, and expand their universalist world views.

The Extroverted states all either lived out their historical plots in the crucible of European history or, like the US, are the political and cultural descendants of European states. The Extroverted states, in keeping with the patterns established over the entire course of their history, grow, develop, and live out their historical plots through interaction with other states. They have a progressive, linear view of history in which states must move forward, grow, and change, or stagnate and be overwhelmed by more powerful neighbors, absorbed, or overtaken by the forces of progress in history. The idea that a state might gain strength by severing its ties and interactions with the outside world for long periods of time would be inconceivable to the Extroverted states, even were it possible for them to do so. The force for change, positive as well as negative, in Extroverted societies is external. Extroverted states are much more likely than Introverted

states to be influenced and changed by their interaction with the outside world. The process of creative stress that drives the historical plot of Extroverted states accounts for the central characteristics of the Extroverted Strategic Personality: the Extroverted states look outward to identify and consolidate their national interests; they see the international system as an intricately and inextricably integrated whole that must find ways to cooperate for the good of the whole system; they see the historical plots of states as similarly interrelated; they are much less boundary sensitive than the Introverted states; and their Ultimate Concerns are rooted, in part, in their ability to share, expand, and export their universalist world views.

Extroversion is the inevitable product of Europe's historical development. As a result, an Extroverted state can no more become an Introverted one than an apple can become an orange. A few have tried, and the result has been the distortion of the state's normal Strategic Personality and the rise of internal contradictions that Extroverted states are, by their nature, ill-equipped to resolve purely intentionally. The Extroverted states are instinctive Darwinians. The interactions and competitions between states create stress. Those states that overcome or resolve their external challenges grow stronger and advance themselves in the process; those that are unable to master external stress are taken over by those that can. The instability of the international system through much of Western history has also been the source of its progress. The competition for power and wealth was the dynamic that created the European state system and, later, the expansion of European cultural influence around the globe. The pace of interaction, competition, and change in Western history has been rapid. As a consequence, the Extroverted states become bored and restive when the international system is too static because it is through the process of adapting to change (be it political, social, technological, or economic) that the Extroverted states grow and advance. If the price of peace and stability is stagnation, then the Extroverted states can be counted upon to continue to stir up the waters.

Extroverted states are not satisfied when things stand still.

One result of this interactive dynamic is the relatively weak sense of boundaries inherent in Europe's historical experience. Political frontiers in Europe have always been fluid, with territories and autonomy seen as bargaining chips to be traded back and forth in the interest of maintaining a relatively stable international system of "legitimate" regimes.² To be sure, legal and economic boundaries proliferated through much of European history, including a daunting system of local tariffs that frustrated the

² Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), pp. 84-94.

development of inland trade into the twentieth century, but as economic historian David Landes points out, these were not boundaries of identity so much as money-making schemes.³ And the Extroverted states' weak sense of boundaries also affords them a great cultural dynamism, allowing them to borrow freely, even hungrily, from each other as well as from other cultures and traditions.

In the globalization era, Introverts and Extroverts alike are learning to accept the reality that the long-term success of their Ultimate Concerns will depend on their ability to plug into the global economy in a way that at least does not undermine and ideally advances those Ultimate Concerns. But where the Introverts seek ways to participate in globalization that do not threaten their internally defined Ultimate Concerns, the Extroverts tend to want to use globalization (like imperialism and meliorism before it) as a means to spread their Ultimate Concerns. The United States has exported its idea of liberty all over the world (albeit with mixed success); the British Empire tried to impose order on "chaotic" colonial realms by importing British administrative structures and political mores; and since at least the 17th century, the French have been motivated by their "mission to civilize."

C. SENSING STATES (S)

Sensing (S) states pay the most attention to concrete, observable things and events, put their greatest trust in what is directly verifiable and measurable through the senses, are acutely aware of their environment, and are disinclined to engage in counterfactual speculations or to look around the next corner until they reach it. The Sensing states have historical plots driven by concerns with geography and material culture, and their Ultimate Concerns are usually tied to territorial or cultural cohesion.

Geography was the principal force shaping the historical plots of the Sensing states. For some, like China and Germany, a lack of natural boundaries created a sense of vulnerability while for others, like Japan and Britain, their physical insularity resulted in a strong, and not always accurate, sense of security and invulnerability. Many of the Sensing states – like Egypt, China, and Japan – grew out of ancient, agricultural societies; others became settled and agricultural later in their historical evolution. Most of the agricultural Sensing states enjoyed adequate or abundant resources, although a few, like Japan and Egypt, faced special geographic challenges in exploiting them. A few of the Sensing states had historical plots driven by the scarcity of resources in their heartlands.

³ David S. Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), p. 245.

Sweden, Germany, and Spain all produced marauders who ventured into the outside world to find new lands and resources to supplement the hardscrabble existence in their homelands. Because they were bound by external threats, internal challenges, or geographic insularity, all of the Sensing states developed a defining sense of racial, ethnic, or even “national” identity early in their historical plots.

The Sensing states pay the most attention to concrete, observable things and events. They are focused on actual present and past events, and put their greatest trust in what is directly verifiable and measurable through the senses. They are solidly grounded in the here and now, with roots embedded deeply in experience. The actual, observable aspects of circumstances and events have a great impact on the strategic conduct of Sensing states; but the hypothetical aspects do not. All states favoring the Sensing function, Introverted as well as Extroverted, are acutely aware of their environment and are focused primarily on what is going on around them in the present, have little patience with counter-factual speculations, and are disinclined to look around the next corner until they arrive there.

The Sensing states often have myths of national origin with strong ties to a particular piece of territory that impart an important element of “nation as territory” into their definition of nationhood. The “evil other” is often identified with forces or out-groups that have sought to violate or otherwise undermine the connection between the people and the land from which they sprang. Sensing states also often have hierarchical social structures in which status is defined by material measures: blood, historical status, wealth, land ownership. Residence and citizenship standards are often strict; naturalization can be difficult in Sensing states and relies to a great extent on the ability of new groups to assimilate into the dominant culture. The Sensing states are frequently ethnically and linguistically homogenous (or seek to be) and tie language to their definition of national identity. These states define their sources of cultural power in terms of stability, tradition, and historical longevity. Their shared reservoirs of identity and patriotic rituals normally have a strong traditionalist bent as, for example, the many public rituals associated with the British royal family. The Golden Ages of Sensing states often lie deep in their past (especially for Introverted Sensing states); even for those who have a more forward-looking national myth (the Extroverted Sensing states, especially), some historical Golden Age is usually an important motif of their national myth. The Sensing states tend to fall in one of two broad categories: those whose historical plot was driven by the constant need to defend their social structures and homelands from invasion (like China or Germany), and those that were geographically separate from their

neighbors and did not have to worry, through much of their history, about invasion (like Japan and Britain). Overall, the Sensing states tend to have Ultimate Concerns tied closely to territory, tradition, and social order.

D. INTUITIVE STATES (N)

Intuitive (N) states pay the most attention to the patterns that emerge as events unfold, focus on the interconnections between current events and the insights they provide into how things might develop in the future, and are constantly looking for the possibilities revealed by unfolding events. The Ultimate Concerns of Intuitive states are tied to the shared national vision, and implementation of that vision drives their historical plot.

The Intuitive states for the most part lack the natural sources of identity that shaped the historical plots of the Sensing states. These are societies defined less by a particular territory or race than by an often “god-given” mission or ideal that provided the impetus for their historical evolution. Most of the Intuitive states are racially or ethnically heterogeneous and, like France and India, needed an idea and a blueprint to pull them together into a nation. These were often societies that developed large-scale agriculture quite late, and some, like Iran (Persia) and Russia, did so only after the arrival of new religions (Zoroastrianism and Russian Orthodoxy) that preached the virtues of stability, community, and common purpose to a previously nomadic or pastoral people. Many – like the United States, Turkey, modern Israel, and Pakistan – are “manufactured” states, created largely as a result of human will, but all share a strong visionary strain. A few fall into the category of small states with big dreams whose determination not be swallowed up by a neighboring, dominant, but somehow discordant or hostile culture drove their historical plots: Portugal (Spain), the Netherlands (Germany, Spain), Pakistan (India), Israel (Europe, Islam).

States with the Intuitive orientation pay the most attention to the patterns that emerge as events unfold. They are focused on the interconnections between current events and the insights they provide into how things might develop in the future. In a sense, the Intuitive states do not note and remember the details of actual events, but rather their abstract impressions of events. The distinction may seem small, but the effect on the cognitive strategies of Strategic Personality types can be profound. The Intuitive states are every bit as aware of the real world as are the Sensing states, but the assumption that guides their perception is that there is more to “reality” than meets the eye. The Intuitive states are constantly looking for the possibilities revealed by events. For the Intuitive

states, where they are going is just as important a consideration in identifying their options as where they are at present.

Intuitive states have myths of national origins that are strongly associated with a particular idea or doctrine, and evil is defined as any force that stands in the way of the nation achieving its guiding ideal. The Ultimate Concerns of the Introverted states are usually tied to the quest to implement and defend a shared national vision. Patriotic rituals are closely tied to reinforcing the guiding idea. Residence and citizenship qualifications are often defined in terms of acceptance of the ideal or doctrine that defines the nation. In comparison to the Sensing states, naturalization in Intuitive states is generally easier, and new groups often influence the host culture as much as they are influenced by it. So, assimilation is often a two-way street and, sometimes, a source of internal stress (as change usually is). As a result, Intuitive states are often culturally and ethnically heterogeneous and blood lineage is not necessarily a key to the definition of the nation. When language is key to an Intuitive state's identity – as in France or Israel – it is as a tool of assimilation or indoctrination to the guiding vision. The definition of nationhood for most Intuitive states is some version of the “nation as shared goal” in which physical boundaries are less important than ideological ones, which can be quite rigid. The Intuitive states may have hierarchical social structures, but they are normally defined in terms of merit. Intuitive states often see their sources of cultural power in terms of creativity, potential, or destiny, and their Golden Ages often lie in the future (especially for Extroverted Intuitive states). Some myth of the promised land, paradise, or utopia is normally part of Intuitive national myth.

E. THINKING STATES (T)

Thinking (T) states prefer to apply logical, scientific, or legalistic rationality to their analysis of events. Values are important to the Thinking states and can provide the basis for their rational orientation (for instance, when those laws are rooted in a strict moral code), but the hierarchy of laws and values is clearly defined, and when values conflict with logic, the Thinking states err on the side of logic. The Ultimate Concerns of Thinking states are usually tied to maintaining the proper order of things, either internally or externally.

The Thinking states often have historical plots driven by some great challenge that could only be overcome by the imposition of strict order on the chaos of reality. Many were societies that were, in some sense, under siege either from nature – like the desert-dwelling Saudis and the arctic Swedes – or from human competitors – like the

geographically insecure Chinese and the Germans, the persecuted Jews (Israel), or the Turks who waged a four-century “clash of civilizations” with Christian Europe. Some – like France, Germany, and India – grew out of an attempt to impose order on a hodgepodge of loosely-related but particularistic tribes, clans, or principalities. What all the Thinking states share is an intellectual predisposition to seek the “proper” order of things, a preference reflected in their religious and secular philosophies. Some – like Germany, China, India, and Saudi Arabia – defined order in natural terms, focusing on social structures and class or caste. Others – like France, Turkey, Pakistan, and Israel – focused on more impersonal political structures as the mechanisms of order. The philosophies that shaped the Thinking states’ judgment fall into two broad categories. The legalistic Thinking states include Israel (Jewish law, Talmud), France (statism, Code Napoleon), Germany (Hegelianism, authoritarianism), Pakistan and Saudi Arabia (Islamic Law), and Turkey (Attatürkism, statism). The moralistic or “principled” Thinking states include China (Confucianism) and India (Hindu philosophy, Gandhi / Nehru).

The Thinking states prefer to apply logical, scientific, or legalistic rationality to their analysis of events. The laws that guide a Thinking state’s judgment are, like scientific rationality, impersonal and seek to be objective; but, they derive their initial assumptions from culture and historical experience that shape a Thinking state’s analysis of how the world works. Values are important to the Thinking states and can provide the basis for their rational orientation (for instance, when those laws are derived from moral codes), but the hierarchy of laws and values is clearly defined. When values conflict with logic, the Thinking states err on the side of logic. These are, if you will, “left brain” states whose judgment stresses analysis and logical reasoning.

The national myths of Thinking states often include a definition of the nation that is concrete and legalistic: either the nation as state (civic nationalism) or the nation as shared language and culture. Thinking states tend to have legal codes that are intricate and clearly defined and that focus on law and order. Government in the Thinking states is often intrusive and designed to establish and maintain social, legal, and economic order. Where government is historically weak (as, for example, in China and Saudi Arabia), rigid systems of social norms often play the role of enforcer. The penal codes of Thinking states may focus narrowly on justice rather than on revenge or rehabilitation – the “eye for an eye” approach. Righteousness in Thinking states is achieved by following the rules so as to maintain the all-important order. Thus, the Ultimate Concerns of Thinking states are usually tied to maintaining the proper order of things, either internally or externally.

Thinking states regard respect as a crucial element of their national power and will foster long resentments when they sense they have not received the respect they deserve.

Humiliation is particularly unbearable and is likely to mutate, in national myth, into righteous indignation, and is often the source of their chosen traumas.

F. FEELING STATES (F)

Feeling (F) states arrive at conclusions by evaluating situations and alternatives according to their own unique hierarchy of values. In any particular event, only certain of their constituent values apply and one or more values may come into conflict. The specific elements of the Feeling state's value structure may change somewhat with time and circumstances. The Feeling states do not deny the utility of logical principles as a way of analyzing problems, but they are suspicious of logic as a final arbiter of conduct; thus, if the dictates of logic are in direct conflict with their value structure, the Feeling states will err on the side of values. The Ultimate Concerns of Feeling states are tied to defending the value system that they see as key to stability, harmony, and cohesion in their societies.

Challenges that were best overcome by relying on shared, cooperative values to force a sense of common purpose for the collective among large, often diverse communities often drove the historical plots of Feeling states. Where Thinking states strove to eliminate chaos, the Feeling states sought to minimize its most disruptive effects. Values that promote social harmony and balance are common among Feeling states with foundations deep in agriculture, like Japan and Egypt. The values that emerged in societies that constantly struggled against hardship and scarcity, such as Russia and Spain, often emphasized heroism and leadership. Some of the Feeling states, including the United States and Iran, faced the challenge of building value systems that could create a shared identity in heterogeneous populations and thus emphasized tolerance, or at least peaceful coexistence. And the value systems that emerged in Feeling states with long traditions of commerce and trade – like Italy, Britain, Portugal, the US, and the Netherlands – emphasized flexibility, consensus-building, and negotiation. Some of the Feeling states – including Japan, Egypt, and Russia – developed value systems that were self-contained and exclusionist. Others – such as the value systems of the US, the Netherlands, Italy, and even Iran (Persia) – were more relativist and inclusive. The religious and philosophical systems that underlie the judgment of the Feeling states fall into two general categories. Some are overtly religious: Egypt (ancient Egyptian faiths, Islam), Portugal and Spain (Roman Catholicism), Russia (Russian Orthodoxy), and Iran

(Zoroastrianism, Shi'a Islam). Others developed civic values that were largely secular (although not necessarily irreligious): Japan, Italy, the Netherlands, the Soviet Union (Marxism-Leninism), Britain, and the United States.

The definition of the nation in Feeling states is likely to be subjective rather than objective – some version of the nation as shared history (and shared values) or the nation as shared goals. Righteousness comes through conducting one's affairs virtuously and doing good. The legal codes in Feeling states are likely to be designed to promote and enforce a particular hierarchy of values (in the United States, for example, personal liberty). In contrast to the Thinking states, the Feeling states often have penal codes that go beyond mere justice and seek retribution or rehabilitation. Government in the Feeling states is often primarily a caretaker of the cherished values and arbiter of differences; at any rate, it is designed primary for advancement and defense of the value system, not for imposing centralized administrative efficiency. For the Feeling states, being admired and recognized for their virtue is important to their sense of national power. As a result, the national traumas of Feeling states are often associated with actions or periods during which they “slipped” in their adherence to those values or were widely perceived as having done so (as in the case of slavery and the Vietnam War in the US).

APPENDIX B

STRATEGIC PERSONALITY AND ULTIMATE CONCERNS:
The Introverted Types

STRATEGIC PERSONALITY AND ULTIMATE CONCERNS: The Introverted Types

STRATEGIC PERSONALITY TYPE	NATURE OF ULTIMATE CONCERNS
IST: Introverted, Sensing, Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defend territorial cohesion against external encroachment • Maintain social, political, economic order and stability • Defend cultural identity • Enforce the system of rules or laws that under-gird stability • Maintain cultural and political boundaries • Prevent external stresses from undermining internal order and stability • Prevent hostile encirclement
ISF: Introverted, Sensing, Feeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain territorial integrity to ensure the link between the land and the culture • Defend cultural identity and uniqueness against external influences • Maintain social and political stability through consensus on values • Defend the hierarchy of values that underlies social harmony • Prevent external stresses and influences from undermining social and political stability
INT: Introverted, Intuitive, Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and defend the national vision • Uphold and defend the system of law and principle that under-girds the national vision • Prevent external stresses from undermining the internal authority of the national vision • Do not compromise underlying principles in the face of external pressures • Create a “zone of safety” for the national vision
INF: Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and defend the national vision • Promote and defend the hierarchy of values through which the vision is realized • Prevent external stresses and influences from undermining the power of the vision and values • Do not compromise values in the face of external pressures • Create a “zone of safety” for the vision

STRATEGIC PERSONALITY AND ULTIMATE CONCERNS:
The Extroverted Types

STRATEGIC PERSONALITY TYPE	NATURE OF ULTIMATE CONCERNS
EST: Extroverted, Sensing, Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain territorial security • Maintain social and political order and stability • Enforce the system of rules or laws that undergird stability and political legitimacy • Expand the scope of rules and laws to govern international interactions • Seek economic power as a source of social order and stability and external influence • Maintain international order and stability by manipulating / managing the balance-of-power
ESF: Extroverted, Sensing, Feeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain territorial security • Maintain shared values as a source of social stability and political legitimacy • Seek economic growth as a guarantor of social stability and external influence • Maintain international order through balance-of-power and agreement on shared values
ENT: Extroverted, Intuitive, Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and expand the national vision • Stand as example to the world of light of reason • Execute the legal and rational “blueprint” for the nation (usually through the state) • Apply the principles underlying state “blueprint” to international arena to impose order on chaos • Apply rational “reasons of state” as basis for international affairs
ENF: Extroverted, Intuitive, Feeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and expand the national vision • Stand as example to the world of righteousness • Conduct domestic and international affairs consistent with the values that underlie the national vision • Apply the values underlying national vision to international arena to make the world a better place • Conduct international affairs in manner that promotes and spreads shared values

APPENDIX C

THE STRATEGIC PERSONALITY TYPES AND EXEMPLAR STATES

**THE STRATEGIC PERSONALITY TYPES
AND EXEMPLAR STATES**

THE INTROVERTED TYPES	THE EXTROVERTED TYPES
<i>IST:</i> Introverted, Sensing, Thinking China Saudi Arabia	<i>EST:</i> Extroverted, Sensing, Thinking Germany Sweden
<i>ISF:</i> Introverted, Sensing, Feeling Japan Egypt Spain	<i>ESF:</i> Extroverted, Sensing, Feeling Great Britain / United Kingdom Italy
<i>INT:</i> Introverted, Intuitive, Thinking Israel India Pakistan	<i>ENT:</i> Extroverted, Intuitive, Thinking France Turkey
<i>INF:</i> Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling Iran Russia / Soviet Union Yugoslavia / Serbia	<i>ENF:</i> Extroverted, Intuitive, Feeling Portugal The Netherlands The United States

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